A REVIEW OF MUNROE HOUSE

Second Stage Housing For Battered Women

by

Women's Research Centre

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A Review of Munroe House: Second Stage Housing for Battered Women

- a program run by the Vancouver YWCA

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1. Introduction:

1.A. Research Rationale:

This research project was undertaken by the Women's Research Centre at the request of the Social Planning Department of the City of Vancouver. Since Munroe House, second stage housing for battered women, is the only service of its kind in Canada, it was agreed that documentation of its development and operation - particularly in its first year of operation - would be useful to those organizations involved in services for battered women. In addition, by utilizing a suitable methodology, an evaluation process could be developed and put in place for the ongoing use of the Munroe House Advisory Committee and staff.

1.B. Terms of Reference of the Contract Between the Women's Research Centre and the City of Vancouver:

(i) To document and analyze how Munroe House meets the needs of its residents; and,

(ii) To build an understanding of the concept of second stage housing by providing a description of Munroe House, for the benefit of organizations and individuals involved in working with battered women.

1.C. Methodology*:

The approach used in this research was based on a modification and extension of the anthropological method of participant observation. This approach starts from the assumption that, in order to understand what is happening in a society or in a situation, one needs to participate in it. The aim is to present for others' understanding the situations one has seen, heard or acted in.

Interviews with Munroe House residents were conducted by Munroe House workers and form the basis for this report. The interviews were small scale and intensive and concentrated on the women's experiences - their descriptions, in their own words, of what their lives were like; how the violent situations had occurred; how they left; their hopes and fears for the future; and their thoughts about Munroe House.

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* For the instruments that were used for data collection, See Appendix I.

Interviews with Munroe House Advisory Committee members, including the Co-Managers of the House, were conducted by Women's Research Centre workers. These interviews concentrated on members' assumptions about wife battering; the process of setting up Munroe House; how the House functions; and expectations of what the House can or should do.

A research file sheet was administered by Munroe House staff to each resident during the research period. It was designed to collect basic demographic information on whom the House served, as well as the problems battered women faced and the resources they used.

In addition, a questionnaire was sent to those community organizations and institutions that Munroe House staff identified as resources residents used.

Finally, the Research Centre reviewed Munroe House policy statements and minutes of Advisory Committee meetings.

Confidentiality was ensured by coding all interviews, file sheets, and questionnaires. In addition, details (for example, location, ethnic background, etc.) that would identify informants have been altered slightly or omitted for presentation in this report.

This study is descriptive and represents the accounts of Munroe House residents, workers, and Advisory Committee members and provides the basis for a clearer understanding of Munroe House.

1.D. Research Process and Time Frame:

(i) January 1980 - April 1980: The design of the research project was developed in meetings of representatives of the Research Centre and Munroe House.

The basis for the research would be the accounts of battered women themselves, as documented in their interviews with Munroe House staff. These interviews would be entirely voluntary. They would be informal and open-ended and as much as possible a part of the ordinary and ongoing relationship staff have with the residents. It was hoped that the interviews could be helpful in assisting residents to examine and assess their own situations in a constructive and supportive relationship.

Research file sheets would be used to collect basic demographic and descriptive information as well as statistics. We agreed that the

collection of this information must not interfere with the interaction between the staff and the residents. All information gathering was decided upon with direct application in mind - each question was assessed to ensure it was necessary and useful, rather than simply "interesting."

Interviews with Munroe House workers were accepted as the best means of documenting their knowledge, work, and the operation of the House. The interview process had the advantage of being less time consuming for staff and likely to elicit information about their work that they may take for granted as a common feature of their daily routine. Similarly, it was agreed, interviews with Advisory Committee members would be more likely to provide information about their roles and expectations, as well as the history of the House.

Interview Guides and the Research File Sheet were reviewed and accepted.

(ii) April - December 1980:

(a) Data was collected. It should be noted that staffing changes at Munroe House delayed the start of data gathering.

Eleven women stayed at Munroe House during the period of data collection. A Research File Sheet was completed for each.

Eight of these residents agreed to be interviewed. Three women declined for personal reasons. Interviews were recorded in the first-person* - that is,in the resident's own words. The average length of interview was one and a half hours. An interview skills workshop was conducted by Research Centre staff for Munroe House workers, prior to the interviews.

The seven current members of the Advisory Committee, including the staff of Munroe House, and two former members were interviewed by Research Centre workers. These interviews were also recorded in the first person and lasted one and a half hours on average.

In addition, 19 questionnaires were sent to representatives of Community Resources, agencies and services residents had used. Ten responses were received.

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* There was one exception: Case History #2. See Appendix II.

(b) During November and December, 1980, the Women's Research Centre workers completed analysis of the data and prepared the research report.

2. A Guide to the Research Report:

Two key aspects of the context in which Munroe House operates must be taken into account in reviewing Munroe House.

First, it is significant that, with the exception of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), none of the community resources whose representatives responded to our questionnaire (see Appendix I) have a policy on wife battering or a policy on services related to the special needs of battered women. The Ministry of Human Resources (MHR) which funds Munroe House has set down procedures for responding to women (including battered women) who come to the Ministry for financial assistance. As noted in Battered and Blamed: Wife Assault from the Perspective of Battered Women (Women's Research Centre and Vancouver Transition House, 1980, page 88) these procedures are flawed. They require that social workers urge reconciliation as their first priority, completely overlooking the implications this may have for a battered woman's physical safety. In short, there is a 'policy vacuum' with regard to wife battering and services for battered women.

Equally important is the fact that Munroe House is a unique program -- the only second-stage house for battered women in Canada. Therefore, those involved in its development are pioneers who are attempting to construct the program without the benefit of models or other groups' efforts and experience to draw on. One Advisory Committee member referred to the difficulty of the process and suggested that it was often overwhelming, "maybe because we knew we were the first." And another Committee member noted "the problem of developing a new facility for which no guidelines existed." Many organizations encounter difficulties in keeping 'on track' with their original purpose when faced with changing demands and expectations or when initial 'growing pains' are overcome. The flexibility to respond to new circumstances and understanding must be balanced against meeting the needs that led to the organization's establishment in the first place. For a new and unique organization, like Munroe House, these difficulties are exacerbated.

These two factors emphasize the importance of Munroe House being grounded, as it has been, in the knowledge and understanding of wife assault that the

women involved had gained through their experience in other organizations and brought to this task. Furthermore, the context in which Munroe House operates underlines the usefulness of regularly reviewing its development to keep a perspective on the program.

Our major aim in this report is to advance a clear understanding of Munroe House. To do so we begin by outlining briefly what Munroe House is; its history; and the various expectations of what it would be. Next we document the actual functioning of Munroe House by looking first at whom it has served - that is, the situations of the women who have been residents of the House. With this basis we review the residents' perspectives on Munroe House, including, how residents used their time at the House and how their needs are met, as indicators of the benefits and limitations of the Munroe House program.

3. A Description of Munroe House:

3.A. Introduction

Munroe House is a second stage house for battered women and their children. Residents can stay at the House for three to six months. The House is operated by the Vancouver YWCA, under the Y's Department of Support Services, and is funded by the B.C. Ministry of Human Resources.

Munroe House is located in a residential neighbourhood of Vancouver and consists of six self-contained suites. The House has a total of 21 beds, including three cribs. There is a T.V./playroom in the basement of the House and a fenced-in play area outside.*

The House accepted its first residents in September 1979 and by December 1980 had accommodated a total of 25 women and 45 children. The average length of stay for residents has been just over three months.

Munroe House is staffed by two women who act as co-managers and share the day to day operating responsibilities, under the general supervision of the YWCA's Director of Support Services (In its initial phase, Munroe House was staffed by a Director and an administrative assistant. In March 1980, the Director resigned and the YWCA in consultation with the Advisory Committee hired two co-managers to run the House.). The co-managers work out of an office on the first floor of the House, five days a week. There are no "live-in" workers. During the time when no member of staff is in the House one of the workers is "on-call" and can be paged in case of an emergency. There are approximately ten women who do volunteer work for Munroe House - primarily by providing baby-sitting service for residents' children.

According to the terms of the YWCA's contract with the Ministry of Human Resources regarding Munroe House, an Advisory Committee is responsible for determining policy for the House and guidelines for its general operation, including hiring of staff and the placement of residents. The contract further specifies that decisions should be made by majority vote and that the composition of the Advisory Committee shall be: one staff representative of the YWCA; one volunteer representative of the YWCA; one Ministry representative; two representatives of a Ministry facility for battered women (i.e., Vancouver Transition House); one representative of the Social Planning Department of City Hall; and the Co-Managers of Munroe House.

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* More detailed information on the House and its facilities is provided in Appendix III, entitled "Moving into Munroe House."

3.B. The History of Munroe House:

According to interviews with Advisory Committee members, the concept of second stage housing developed out of concerns put forward primarily by Transition House workers. The major concern focussed on battered women's needs for additional time and support after their stay at Transition House. Transition House provides an essential crisis intervention service; it is a source of practical support and assistance for battered women that enables women to begin the process of improving their situations. However, a woman's stay at Transition House is limited (in all but exceptional cases) to one month. This is considered insufficient time to address the range and complexities of problems a battered woman generally faces, such as protection, the lack of support services, housing, employment, and so on. Workers in the field were concerned that many women are, in fact, "forced" to return to a battering situation because of the lack of alternatives. Second stage housing was identified as a means of providing a useful supplement to Transition House services.

The YWCA has a history of involvement in housing women with various needs (for example, a 225 bed Residence-Hotel; a Housing Registry Service; and for ten years, until June 1978, co-ordinating a program for housing single parents). And, it was the YWCA which took the initiative in bringing together interested representatives of community organizations and institutions to address the need for second stage or "interim" housing and to make the concept a practical reality. The process began in 1977 following the United Way Symposium on Family Violence. In September 1977, a proposal to the provincial Ministry of Human Resources for a "Second-Stage Transition House" was refused. By July 1978, discussions with potential funding sources, such as Health and Welfare Canada, and others, led the members of what had been termed "the Task Force on Housing for Battered Women" to consider developing a "broader program" rather than focussing on housing alone (July 1978 Memorandum from Virginia Langdon, YWCA, to Task Force Members). Thus, the Y's "Battered Wives' Program" was developed.

In November 1978, a proposal for funding put forward by the YWCA identified the purpose of an interim housing facility to be: to give women time to examine their options, "make a plan and begin to take the action needed to reach an alternative to being battered." The proposal

stated that there was a need for a "second stage Transition House" where women could stay long enough to renew their self-esteem and make a plan for the future. Although housing was the primary focus of the proposal, reference was also made to a "rehabilitation plan" for battered women to "reduce the need for higher expenditures in the treatment services" for their families. Overall, the interim housing program was seen as a housing and counselling service and an attempt to develop a network of community services and resources which each woman could continue to use after she leaves the program. This proposal, of November 1978, is the basis on which Munroe House was built.

It should be noted that the contract between the MHR and the YWCA does not refer specifically to battered women and its reference to the program of Munroe House is vague. It requires that the YWCA provide a "sheltered living environment for certain women over 17 years of age, with or without children, who cannot be immediately placed in other resources to attend to their own needs." The Ministry of Human Resources has the authority over Munroe House, by virtue of its funding of the House. However, the contract requires that the program "encourage independence and maintain program participants' moral and emotional well-being and general care."

3.C. Expectations of Munroe House:

In the interviews we conducted with Advisory Committee members and in reviewing the development of Munroe House policy, it has become clear that there are various and sometimes divergent expectations of Munroe House.

Looking first at the interview information, five main categories of expectations emerge. Most often Advisory Committee members said that Munroe House should provide its residents with practical skills. These include such things as budgeting, how to open a bank account, etc.; housekeeping skills; language training; and learning how to deal more effectively with their children. Almost as frequently mentioned as practical skills was legal assistance- that is, residents of Munroe House should be helped to settle their legal problems with regard to protection from continued assaults by their husbands, separation agreements, and so on. Ending their isolation, making friends, developing "social skills," "learning how to have fun" were also considered to be major goals. In addition, several Advisory Committee members said they expect Munroe House to provide

support to residents whereby they can consider their options and make decisions about the future. The quality of support should be such that women feel stronger, more confident, more in control of their lives when they leave Munroe House. And, residents should be supported in their decisions, whether they decide to return to their husbands or try to set out on their own. The fifth main expectation is that Munroe House residents will, during their stay, acquire information and "survival skills" - that is, they should leave with a better knowledge of available resources and services and how to utilize them. (It should be noted that housing was mentioned infrequently, presumably because it is recognized as an obvious necessity.)

Among Advisory Committee members there appears to be general agreement that Munroe House is expected to provide its residents with "practical skills," legal assistance, "social skills," support, and information. However, it should be noted that some Committee members had different expectations, primarily with regard to "independence."

Several past and present Advisory Committee members spoke of the expectation that Munroe House should help its residents to gain independence. Economic independence was identified as a goal by one former member of the Committee. She was specific, noting that "financial independence is the main goal" and Munroe House should help women to "get off income assistance." She added that Munroe House should also achieve emotional independence for women. Another woman who had been on the committee suggested that it was not necessarily financial independence she expected - the residents might still be on income assistance - but rather that Munroe House should give women the supports that will make it possible for them to stay out of an abusive situation. This would require "something that would make sense to them as a therapeutic encounter" at Munroe House or through another agency. She said the House is a resource where residents should "build on their strong points,...complete it in six months and move out."

However, most committee members saw the Munroe House program in less definitive terms. They emphasized the need to "encourage self-reliance" by providing a "supportive environment." As one woman said, it should be a place where women "can analyze their situations and examine their problems

without 'therapizing' in a place that reduces their isolation and lets them hear how other women have experienced the same things." Others noted the barriers that exist to residents becoming financially independent when adequately paid employment is hard to get and child care for their young children is scarce.

Overall, Advisory Committee members recognized battered women's problems as diverse and complex - problems that are not amenable to quick, simple solutions. One committee member pointed out that it's unrealistic to expect a three to six month stay at Munroe House will resolve a woman's problems - "it may take years." Another woman expected that the "gains [of staying at Munroe House] might be different for each woman." The resolution of these various expectations in Munroe House policy are reviewed in the following section.

3.D. The Policy of Munroe House

In its early meetings, the Advisory Committee was dealing with basic administrative matters, such as the lease, taxes, insurance, and the contractual relationship between the YWCA and the Ministry of Human Resources - essential matters to resolve in order to set up the House. At the same time, there were thorough and often lengthy discussions focussed on defining the purpose of Munroe House. In part these discussions took place before there were any residents in the House and they were an attempt to anticipate how the House would function. Although the major policy debates, particularly with regard to the referral/admissions policy, appear to have occurred with most intensity after the House had begun operation, the earlier discussions are also significant.

In reviewing these discussions, it is important to note the interconnection between apparently straightforward administrative concerns and policy questions. For example, a suggestion that an alarm system was required in each suite led to a discussion of the degree of security needed. One committee member said it was a matter of balancing battered women's real needs for protection against the possibility that Munroe House would be an "armed fortress." Similarly, the Committee debated the need for a live-in staff person. (The original proposal had included a live-in worker as part of the staff complement and a woman was actually offered

the job. However, according to the Minutes of August 2, 1979, "it didn't work out"; the woman was not hired; and the Committee recognized the need to delineate the job more clearly.) These two issues raised questions about who would be residents of Munroe House; what their needs would be; and what Munroe House would offer them.

In addition to the question of the need for a live-in staff person, the Committee considered at various times the desireability of having more staff, including a child care worker. Central to the staffing discussion was the degree of dependence or independence of the residents and the concomitant implications for staff functions. Were more staff necessary in order to free the Director's time for more formal or intensive counselling with the residents? The Committee agreed that the role of the staff was one of "support for practical services and that women should be referred to other resources if they are in need of other types of support services." (Minutes, March 19, 1980). In April 1980, the Committee did decide that having two workers sharing responsibility as Co-Managers of the House would be preferable to a Director and assistants. Advisory Committee members said this decision has been confirmed by experience. The Committee has also stated that "Munroe House is not a treatment centre or therapeutic home" (Policy statement, May 1980)[1].

Would hiring a child care worker produce an unrealistic situation for the residents? To what degree should Munroe House approximate the situation women will face when they leave the House? Would it not be more realistic to assist women to use the child care services available in the community - which is, presumably, what they will have to do when they are living on their own? The Committee decided not to apply for funds for a child care worker (Minutes, March 10, 1980), although discussion of this issue has not been closed.[2]

The Committee also debated at length the question of admission to Munroe House. Again, implications for the service Munroe House could or should provide were central to the discussions. Some Committee members contended that the House had been established in order to assist those battered women who had the "greatest need" for second-stage housing. To other members the women who were of greatest need were less likely to benefit from Munroe House, since they were "chronic users" (or, as one

1. See Appendix IV, Policy for Admittance to Munroe House.

2. Munroe House did hire a student, through the provincial Ministry of Labour summer student employment program, who worked as a temporary child care worker from May to August 1980.

member said, "chronic abusers") of the social service system. One Committee member suggested in her interview with us that Munroe House was not an appropriate resource for "multi-problem people" and, therefore, "you shouldn't waste your resources" by including them. Further, it was argued, to include women of greatest need would be duplicating services that the Ministry of Human Resources provides. This was a significant argument since the Ministry of Human Resources funds, and thus has authority over, the House. However, one woman pointed out that Munroe House, like Transition House, would not duplicate MHR services. On the contrary, these Houses are based on the need for the unique services they provide that are not available elsewhere in the community. After several discussions it was decided that drug or alcohol dependence and "a history of being in chronic need of support services and/or evidence of on-going chronic need" were two factors that would reduce a woman's potential to benefit from Munroe House (May 1980, Policy Statement). Within these policy guidelines, Vancouver Transition House is responsible for selection of residents first; if there are no referrals from that source or from other Transition Houses, Ministry of Human Resources workers are notified for referrals.

Since Munroe House is, as we noted earlier, a new and unique program with no pre-tested models, it was inevitable that those involved in setting it up would have different perspectives on its purpose and operation. In addition, the composition of the Advisory Committee was determined by the Ministry of Human Resources and ensured that different vested interests and views would have to be accommodated. This could have created problems. However, as several committee members noted, it was beneficial for the committee to have the involvement of representatives of organizations that could facilitate the setting up of Munroe House. The discussions and policy decisions recorded in the Minutes of Advisory Committee meetings and the accounts members provided in interviews with us suggest that the Committee struggled successfully to balance conflicting views. While it has adhered, in large part, to the program's original purpose (as outlined in the November 1978 funding proposal), it has also incorporated into its decisions the knowledge and understanding born of the experience of actually operating the program.

However, a review of Munroe House, its policy and operation, must be based on the perspective of its residents. In the following sections of this report we focus first on whom Munroe House serves, by examining their situations according to the accounts they provided in their interviews with researchers. Secondly, we outline what their needs and expectations are and the degree to which Munroe House addresses them.

4. Munroe House from the residents' perspective:

4.A. The Shape of Their Lives: The Circumstances of Women at Munroe House.

This information is taken from interviews conducted with the women resident at Munroe House from March to December 1980. The quotations which appear in the following presentation have been abstracted from the interviews to illustrate some of the patterns of relationships and problems which recur in the women's situations (the complete material appears in Appendix II). We also provide a framework for understanding this recurrence.*

The first point to note here is that the women who live in Munroe House come from relationships in which they have been physically and/or psychologically abused. ("Relationship" as used here and elsewhere in this discussion refers to a marital or equivalent relationship.) From the accounts themselves, as the following illustrative quotations show, the relationships are bad relationships. The definition of a relationship as "bad" is not derived from what is in principle "bad" or in contrast to what is in principle "good" - but from the descriptions women provided. The difficulties that are described can best be understood in relation to the women's own hopes and expectations as they entered these situations. We begin by looking at the characteristics of these relationships. These are, primarily, physical, verbal and/or sexual violence - in many instances related to the husband's alcohol abuse, his jealousy of his wife, his undermining and criticism of many aspects of his wife's behaviour, and/or conflicts surrounding the woman's pregnancy or the birth of their children.

> The beatings started when I had (son) and there was more responsibility and less freedom for both of us, especially me. Drinking was a part of it - I drank a little but he drank heavily and still does. We didn't really have a good relationship before we got married but he didn't beat me. I was studying so I couldn't go out much, but he would go out every night. We didn't talk much. I didn't feel there was a reason for the beatings. He'd get mad about anything. He would say I went out too much, didn't go out enough, his friends didn't like me - in other words he would always find some reason to beat me up. I was jealous of him (I am not anymore) because I was scared that he was meeting other women when he went out. He would hit me drunk or sober if he was mad enough. There was lots of physical

* See also Battered and Blamed - A Report on Wife Assault from the Perspective of Battered Women, Women's Research Centre and Vancouver Transition House, 1980, for additional analysis and description of related issues.

> abuse and psychological abuse also. And threats. There was forced sexual activity before (daughter) was born but not since.
>
> Right from the start there was a lot of verbal abuse. But soon it was physical and got much worse towards the end. It would happen when he had been drinking. Frequency is difficult to remember but in last six months it was on a weekly basis. He called me everything in the book - "a lazy bitch", "whore", "all you do is sit on your ass" (I went to work when (son) was three weeks old and I worked the whole of the marriage - I had some months off but always went back to work).
>
> He started beating me up after (daughter) was born - about five years after we started living together, usually after he had been drinking....Once he accused me of going with someone else because I was pregnant with (daughter) and he said he was sterile. But I hadn't been with anyone else and I told him so. He said that he was only testing me. I thought it was very mean of him.
>
> He started beating me when we lived common-law and (daughter) was small. He beat me after drinking. Never hit me sober - that I can remember. He would beat me once or twice a week but it got worse and we were arguing a lot. He accused me of going out with guys. He would get mad if I went to my girl-friend's with the kids for a couple of hours. He expected me to stay home no matter what.

These features of bad relationships can be seen in contrast to the postive hopes and expectations women had of marriage, which were expressed in the following ways:

> I thought marriage would be a bowl of cherries. I thought I would change him. What a fool I was - there was no way he would change. I had never lived on my own before getting married.
>
> I thought marriage would be the old-fashioned thing, where two people fall in love, get married and have kids. I felt (husband) would always take care of me. He was always a big shoulder. I was really, really in love with him.
>
> I expected everything would change when we got married - this baby would be his. He had been beating me all the time. He laid off for a while when I was pregnant and for a couple of months he was good to the kids and me, then he started drinking again.

It is important to stress that in all these cases both women and men face serious social and economic problems which marriage and the birth of children exacerbate. The consequences for men and women are different. These differences and their consequences for women are what the following analysis and description focusses on. As far as the situations of the men are concerned it is their social and economic competence that is consistently in question: they are often unable to function adequately in their jobs or they are frequently unemployed; they drink excessively; they appear as men who have been unable to find a place in the world; and as men, who for whatever reasons, cannot handle the responsibilities for home life and children. Nonetheless, they remain the authorities in the family, and their wives and children are dependent on them as well. This is a situation that is reinforced by the society at large. More specifically it is a view of family structure and organization that is frequently reinforced by those from whom help is sought. The following quotations illustrate some of the problems involved.

> He's got emotional problems. (Husband) is illiterate, cannot read or write.

> He is frustrated if things don't go his way, and then he strikes out. His fights with others start verbally and he gets pretty low and the other person would get mad - he has been in lots of fights.

Given situations like these, women lack support and resources, as well as enduring a constant process of being undermined by both physical and psychological abuse. In the face of these manifold problems the women are nonetheless expected to take full responsibility for household and children in terms of maintenance and day-to-day organization. It is women's dependency and lack of formal control in such relationships that makes for the difficulties they experience. Their accounts, which appear below, reveal these difficulties. Frequently, women are held responsible for situations which they did not create; situations in which they cannot "take charge", and in which it is also problematic for them to leave. We want here to make these patterns and problems apparent, using the words of the women themselves. In addition, these accounts provide the basis for seeing the contrast between these situations and the outcome of their stay at Munroe House (see Section 4B). The following are examples of the circumstances of physical abuse:

> It started about a year after we were married. He started to give little hits across the head, nothing that would ever show - the head or the arms. In an argument I would try to get out the door. I knew if I could get out and walk around I would cool off and could talk rationally, so I would try to get out the door. He would block the door and that would make me crosser...
>
> Really, there was no reason for the beatings. He would never talk to me, never discuss anything. There was little or no communication on his part.
>
> He often hit me in front of others. Some people tried to restrain him, and others were embarrassed and never came back.
>
> I had a lot of bruises, I didn't ever have any broken bones, or anything like that. He always made sure no one could see...used his hands...and he was real good with his feet.

The effects of psychological abuse and the process of being undermined by their husbands are evident in the following examples:

> I felt angry when he beat me. I would get depressed and sometimes took it out on the kids. "What's wrong with me?" I would think. I was afraid, not sure of myself. Lots of different emotional feelings.
>
> I felt degraded. Ashamed of having friends because I knew I would tell them that (husband) beat me up and they would know what was happening. I felt that I was a terrible mother and wife. I felt I deserved it because he said so. Everyone he knew beat up their women. I too thought it was normal - I provoked him.
>
> Used to psych myself out...used to drink a bit, but not much...used it as a pacificer...virtually a prisoner, you can't get out. I was taking phenobarbs (saved from 1975 when my husband got them for 'his nerves') in the morning and drinking martinis at night just before I left. I have stopped.
>
> I was really depressed. It was almost like I had no energy left to do anything. I was really sad -- anything would make me cry. I really felt not worthwhile. I wished I had people around. I would see other people with good marriages and felt really lonely even though I was married.

The difficulties women experienced in relation to their husbands' authority are illustrated in the quotes that follow. What emerges clearly from women's accounts is their husbands' efforts to control the women's behaviour, to enforce their dependency and to isolate them.

> He was extremely jealous of me. He would start fights if someone looked at me (or if he thought they had looked at me). He wouldn't let me wear certain clothes. He never allowed me to have single friends. Over the years we lost all our friends, single and married, except his 'leeching' friends.
>
> The reasons I left this time, and for good, is because he wouldn't let me see my other children. He would get mad if they came over to visit and I made them a cup of tea. He threatened to kill them if they came over. He said I'd be sorry if they came over again. He was mean. I wouldn't tell him they came over then they would tell him. He'd get mad if I told him and mad if I didn't tell him.
>
> I never had a key to the apartment, he said, "you don't need a key." I couldn't go out without him, even shopping. If I was on the phone when he phoned he'd be angry. I wanted to get a job but he wouldn't let me.
>
> The beatings started three months after (son) was born. Anything would set him off. Mostly he said that I was babying (son). That I picked him up, kissed him, that I dressed him wrong. He would tell me what to feed him. He bought everything, including my clothes when I was with him. He beat me up about every two weeks and he never drank.
>
> He couldn't get along with the kids. Always arguing, and that's why (daughter) ran away...He always wanted his own way, even with little things. He didn't hit the kids but was always arguing or shouting. He wouldn't let them work or do babysitting, even when the children lived next door. He wouldn't allow them to be independent in any way.

The result of time spent in these situations is that the women lose all sense of their own competence. For many of these women, their husband's control was difficult to break. Fear of reprisals by their husbands inhibited some women from leaving. For others, fear of social disapproval, if they told "outsiders" what had been happening to them or sought help, left them without resources. If they took the initiative and left home, they often had to return to their husbands because they lacked the support or money to live independently, especially with young children.

Those women who did seek assistance from the police or the helping professions, in many cases had to overcome existing social policies and laws which uphold men's right to control their wives. Fortunately, the women whose situations are reported here were successful eventually in getting to a transition house and receiving help. (Information provided on the

research file sheets indicate that most of these women had left home more than once before they came to Transition House and Munroe House.) The following quotations are representative:

> I always thought I should leave but I was too scared. I didn't know where to go as I had no friends - he had made sure of that by never making them feel welcome. When he hit me I was upset mainly, it wouldn't have done me any good to get angry he would have got madder. I wasn't happy. I always wished I knew how to talk back but I never knew how.
>
> I left once before, he's left twice and thrown me out once. I never tried to get help before, I wouldn't talk to anyone about what was happening. I went to a motel and then went back after about two weeks.
>
> after being beaten... I told police what happened and the Constable said they really didn't want to get involved. They went and talked to (husband) and asked him if he wanted to go to a marriage counsellor. He said yes and Police came and told me. I said I wasn't going home. Eventually I phoned the Crisis Line and they got in touch with Transition House. Transition House phoned me back and I took a taxi there.
>
> I went to Family Court and they phoned Transition House for me and I went right up there. The Court gave me a no-contact order, but he keeps trying to see me.
>
> Many people were helpful <u>this time</u>; doctors, counsellors, at Transition House, RCMP, police, minister, my boss, probation officers. Lots of people supported me, including social workers. [Emphasis added.]

This section has focussed on the accounts that residents of Munroe House have given of their past situations. The women describe themselves as having felt imprisoned in situations of dependency, powerlessness, and violence. They were usually isolated and had no family or friends on whom they could fall back. They were financially dependent on their husbands and could see no other means of supporting themselves. And, in the majority of situations, they had been undermined emotionally to the point where the only decision they were able to make was to leave. In addition to their own problems they had the responsibility for their children. These accounts then are of women who have left chronically conflicted and violent

situations and who desperately require the time and space offered by a resource such as Munroe House to reconsider their circumstances and options.

4.B. How residents used Munroe House:

4.B(i) Introduction

The research file sheet (see Appendix I), administered to each Munroe House resident during the research period, included a question about women's reasons for coming to the House. Safety and security for themselves and their children were the most frequently mentioned reasons.

Residents were asked specifically if their husbands were looking for them, wanted reconciliation or were threatening vengeance. Only three women answered "no." One woman was very afraid that her husband would find her and abduct her children or "pay someone to do it." Another said her husband was trying to find their children. And, one woman believed her husband wanted to retaliate because she had begun legal proceedings against him.

It is significant, in light of this information, that all but four of the residents used legal services, usually a private lawyer, during their stay at Munroe House. Some began to work out a separation agreement or custody proceedings; laid assault charges; or got a restraining order against their husbands.

Protection from continued assaults by their husbands, even after the women have left home, has been determined to be the most crucial need facing battered women, according to many researchers and Transition House workers.* Unfortunately, lack of protection has also been recognized as a major shortcoming of law enforcement and legal services in Canada. The experience of one resident offers further evidence of this fact: in order to be safe she had to move to Vancouver and Munroe House from a city in eastern Canada. In this case and others, peace bonds and restraining orders were not effective - they were ignored - according to several residents. Clearly, transition houses and second stage housing will be essential sources of safety and security until protection through legal action is a reality.

Time to plan for the future, to "get used to being alone," and to deal with the practical aspects of "a new beginning," was a reason many

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* See, for example, Wife Battering in Canada: The Vicious Circle, MacLeod, 1980; and Battered and Blamed: A Report on Wife-Assault from the Perspective of Battered Women, Women's Research Centre and Vancouver Transition House, November 1980.

residents gave for wanting to come to Munroe House. Women also said they needed time to "get stronger," relax, and re-establish their relationships with their children. As we noted earlier, Munroe House was developed out of the concern that a one month stay at a transition house is often insufficient for a battered woman to take steps to resolve her situation. Although all of the women in our research population had stayed at a transition house, they needed the time their stay at Munroe House provided.

In addition, while they were at Munroe House, residents also dealt with any medical problems they had and organized their financial situations. Two women contacted Canada Employment and Immigration to explore job training possibilities. Others began working through the Volunteer Incentive Program (MHR). Some women continued their contact with social workers they had consulted in the past. In a few cases, residents continued in the counselling programs they had begun before coming to Munroe House. Several women, as well as focussing more of their own attention and time on their children, also obtained day care services and/or counselling for their children. This was an especially important undertaking since many women's parenting role had been undermined by their husbands' psychological abuse - whereby women were told they were "unfit" mothers or criticized constantly. And, of course, housing was a problem that each resident had to address. It is an issue we will discuss in more detail later (see pages 31-32).

It is clear that during their stay at Munroe House, residents dealt with practical matters and located many community resources and services they needed. Furthermore, they had the time to develop a different outlook on their past and future. We discuss this process in more detail in the following section.

4.B(ii) The residents' assessment of Munroe House:

Women's comments on Munroe House, and on how their feelings about themselves and their situations had changed since they had been at the House, indicate that their stay had been a positive experience. The following are representative comments:

> I like what is happening here.
>
> There's nothing I'm not getting at Munroe House.
>
> I like it...There's nothing I want or need that is not being met.
>
> It's enjoyable here when there are no upsets in the House.

Some women said they were glad to be there but noted their uncertainty or uneasiness when the House was "hectic" or there were "upsets." (The workers point out that it is likely these residents were referring to new residents arriving or to conflicts between the residents, having usually to do with their children.) One woman said her only problems with the House were,

> It isn't your own place. You have to abide by the rules -- it's not your own responsibility. It feels like it's somebody else's and not yours yet.

However, other residents liked Munroe House because "it's private, like my own place, like living on my own;" or "it's nice having my own suite."

Residents appreciated the support they received from the staff and from the other residents. This support was particularly important to them because they had come from situations in which they had been isolated. One woman commented that she "enjoyed having people to talk to." Another woman said that, although she was more involved with her neighbours than she had expected to be, "everyone is being good to me." One resident described how helpful it was to have other women nearby for support. She gave the example of being lonely when her daughter went to visit her father on a long weekend, "but I went up to see (another resident), and she was happy to see me."

One Advisory Committee member said the staff play an important role in "bringing women together from various backgrounds and having them live cohesively." She also noted the patience and sensitivity, to women at

different stages of their lives, that is required of staff. Munroe House workers pointed out that the regular 'pot-luck' dinners and House meetings they have are useful in helping residents to develop friendships with each other and in initiating group activities.

For several women a positive feature of living at Munroe House was the fact that they were busy, "doing interesting things." One woman, who was working three mornings a week, said she likes it that her "days are varied , busy."

In many cases, women said they were more relaxed at the House than they had been living with their husbands. Not surprisingly, being safe from physical violence and psychological abuse was noted by residents as one reason they were less tense.

> I now feel more relaxed, and that. It's a lot better to have my own money, too. There's no fighting and no beating. It's very different from living at home - more relaxed.
>
> I feel freer and I don't have to worry about anything. I don't have to ask anybody.
>
> I feel relaxed here because I don't have to worry about (husband) coming around here -- or anyone else -- I'm not as nervous any more. I don't have constant headaches.

One of the Munroe House workers described the changes she has observed many residents experiencing:

> When they come, the women are insecure, frightened, confused, but optimistic. When they leave, they are less confused, stronger, a little more self-confident. A lot of them gain or lose weight too because they're more relaxed. They're healthier physically. Some get into 'keep fit' or swimming. Nervous stomachs and things tend to be almost eradicated.

Being able to relax and getting involved in activities, including settling some of the practical aspects of their lives, resulted in many women feeling better about themselves.

> I am feeling pretty good now. I feel positive, have a better outlook on life. I feel much better about myself. I feel better about my kids. I feel like a burden has been lifted off my shoulders.

> I feel a lot better about myself now. I'm really busy. I'm doing things which are interesting to me. Meeting people I like, getting involved politically. I'm getting into acting. I knew it was all out there, but just had to go out there to get it.

Other women spoke of being more aware of their options and making decisions about how to live their lives.

For some women, the improvement in their relationship with their children was a particularly beneficial dimension of their stay at Munroe House. For example:

> My relationship with my kids is getting better. With (son) it is better, although he still has his moments and I still have mine. (Daughter) has always been easy. We're all in our routine now, we're all learning...It's definitely upward, not like what it was.

Although, as we have seen, their time at Munroe House provided residents with many benefits, problems remain. These problems, which are largely beyond the control or mandate of the Munroe House program, are discussed in the following section of this report.

4.B(iii) The continuing problems:

The problems that remain for women in spite of the benefits of their stay at Munroe House are evident in residents' comments on their hopes and fears and their views of what their lives might be like in the future. (See Appendix I for Interview Guide for Residents).

Most women said they wanted "to be happy and fulfilled," or "to live at my highest every hour of the day." And they wanted to be independent, assertive women:

> I would like to be managing on my own and making it. Independent - not settled with anyone. I'm telling myself to go slow...I know there will be ups and downs but I think you can make choices and leave the negative and go with what is good.
>
> I want to be fulfilled, my course done, my kids happy. I want to speak out more - not be chicken of anything.

However, each woman was also realistic about the problems they faced, particularly as single mothers. Some women referred to the loneliness they anticipated and said they knew they would need supportive friends. They were concerned about the responsibilities they had, especially to make decisions independently.

> I'm afraid I'm not going to do it right - like raising the kids.
>
> I am aware of more things now than I was before - options about how to live my life. Before I was afraid of myself - I was afraid of not making the right decisions. I wasn't afraid of anything while at Munroe House, except me.

Furthermore, most women identified practical problems they had to contend with including legal matters, housing, money and their concerns for their children.

As we noted earlier, protection against their husbands finding them and assaulting them is a major and justified concern of most battered women. Munroe House residents are no exception. They hoped that the legal actions they had taken would protect them, but several said they were still afraid.

Another major worry was finding a suitable, affordable place for themselves and their children to live. This concern was intensified for those women who were also worried about the difficulties of surviving financially. Most of them had been economically dependent on their

husbands in the past and the responsibility and feasibility of now supporting themselves and their children worried them. One woman who is employed - "with a promotion on the horizon" and thus, better able than others to support her family - faced having her economic independence undermined because she was being held responsible for the several thousand dollars worth of debts her husband had incurred. Another woman was concerned because "I couldn't earn enough to support us without welfare." The fact that women in our society earn less than men and that their incomes are often insufficient to support a family has been well documented.[1] In addition, as Munroe House workers and other Advisory Committee members pointed out, for single mothers with young children, the lack of childcare services severely restricts their labour force participation. Therefore, many Munroe House residents must rely on welfare and they were worried about "making ends meet." These fears are unfortunately well-founded. Welfare payments and other benefits combined are well below the poverty line in all provinces in Canada, according to the National Council of Welfare.[1]

A further concern, identified by all Munroe House residents, related to their children. Residents were asked in their interviews with researchers to comment specifically on their relationships with their children. Their accounts reveal that, for many, these relationships had improved during their stay at the House. Living apart from the children's fathers, who often undermined the women's parenting role (as noted in Section 4.B.i.), would account in part for these improvements. Several women noted the effects on their children of seeing their mothers assaulted.[2] They spoke of the fear and anger their children exhibited.

> (Son) was afraid of him before we left -- they were crying a lot and were afraid. Now they are more easy-going -- they are more themselves....

---

1. See for example, Women in Poverty - A Report by the National Council of Welfare, 1979, for an analysis of women's vulnerability to poverty in Canada.
2. For a more complete discussion of the effects of wife battering on children see Appendix V of Battered and Blamed: A Report on Wife-Assault from the Perspective of Battered Women, November 1980, for a presentation by the Vancouver Transition House child care worker on "Children from violent homes."

> He saw the hitting. I can remember times when he was really scared and he'd hide in the corner of his room and I hated to see that... He asks, "Mummy, do firemen get married?" I say, "Yup." Then he says, "Then I'm not going to be a fireman." He also says, "I don't want to fall in love." He used to ask these questions more often than he does now.

In some cases, the children's feelings towards their fathers had not changed appreciably. One woman said:

> I think (son) is angry with his father, maybe even hates him, and (daughter) is scared of him. I hope they'll change when they realize that he is very sick. I don't want them to hate him.

Some residents were concerned about their husbands' visits with the children. One woman, who has left Munroe House, explained that her children enjoy seeing their father and are excited when they know he's coming over, "but sometimes he disappoints them, changes his plans." Another woman was worried about her husband's visits with her daughter and, "in case he tried anything sexual with her," asked a Munroe House worker to talk with the girl.

In several cases, the women indicated that they were trying to work out a better relationship between themselves and their children. They wanted their children to be happy and "level-headed;" to be settled in school or daycare and to have "lots of friends." And, they wanted to avoid hitting or yelling at their children. One woman, who left her husband because she could see what his violent behaviour towards her was doing to the children, said she wants them to learn to tell her want they want, and if she can provide it, she will. Another woman said she doesn't like it when her daughter "doesn't listen, but I don't hit or yell. I try to talk with her."

The workers at the House spoke of the role they play in supporting the women in their relationships with their children. Both workers noted that the children, especially the older ones, need to talk with them, "they like to relate to other adults." In addition, the staff may discuss with the children a problem the mother is having with them. And, each of the workers, when it is appropriate, discusses with a resident different ways of dealing with her children, particularly alternative ways of disciplining them. One of the workers emphasized the importance of keeping discussions with the residents about their children on a practical level and focussed on options, rather than

suggesting "parenting skills." The worker noted the "women are devastated by being told they need 'parenting skills ' this is what her husband used, among other things, as an excuse for beating her."

In summary, it is clear that their stay at Munroe House is beneficial for women on several levels. What they begin to recover for themselves at Munroe House is their ability to cope with their own lives and those of their children. They establish routines; they are able to work; they can make and enjoy social contacts; they can plan and organize for their children.

Their requirements, are on the surface, modest. However, if one looks closely at the situations they have come from, one can see that to sustain this independence in these apparently modest ways is a hard task and one which will take time. Munroe House is an urgently needed resource that can and does lay the foundations for continued independence from abusive relationships and the move to greater social competence for the women who live there.

4.C. Where women go when they leave Munroe House:

Information is available on where nine residents (out of the total of 11 women who stayed at the House during the research period) went after staying at Munroe House.

In one case, the staff indicated that "nothing was resolved," noting that the woman returned to her husband and the same situation she had left. However, several weeks after her return she was beaten by her husband and left him. She is now living on her own. In another case, the resident moved into a new apartment after leaving Munroe House, but the staff has learned that the man who had beaten her is living there too. Although he has promised not to beat her again, the woman is afraid. Direct follow-up by staff is not possible in this case. However, the staff will advise a worker, who has continuing contact with the woman, of the situation to ensure that some supportive contact is maintained.

One resident returned home to her husband but Munroe House workers feel she will be protected against further assaults by her father who will be living with her and her husband.

Six of the nine residents are now living independently of their husbands. One of these women found an apartment for herself and her daughter and is "in good shape," according to Munroe House staff who are still in touch with her regularly. Two women moved into apartments with women friends and their children who, the staff believe, will be helpful and supportive. And, a fourth woman found an apartment with her sister and her children. She is filing for divorce, has "lots of support" from her family and a good woman lawyer; and she has a good job with a supportive boss.

Two women returned to the homes they had shared with their husbands. However, in both cases, the husband has left. One of these women is looking for a job, and has friends nearby for support. Still, Munroe House staff are afraid her husband may try to move back in with her. Therefore, though this woman lives outside Vancouver, the staff will keep in touch with her by telephone. The other woman hopes to remain safely in the home she had shared with her husband because she has a court order requiring "unobstructed occupancy" and a restraining order.

It is clear that, in all cases, the women's situations have improved. Those women who have returned to their husbands are less vulnerable to being trapped in a violent or dangerous situation with no recourse or assistance available to them. And, most of the women are now living independently of the men who had beaten them. They have all established contacts which make it possible for them to receive support and help if and when they need it.

5. Benefits and Limitations of Munroe House

5. A. From the Residents' Perspective:

The women's accounts show that Munroe House meets successfully the needs of its residents. Women came to Munroe House to be in a safe place, free from the danger of their husbands' assaults, with time to develop a new perspective on their past and to plan for the future. While they were at the House, residents dealt with the practical difficulties of their situations and they located many of the community resources they needed.

They benefited from being with other women at Munroe House, including the staff, who provided friendship and support that marked an end to the isolation so many of them had experienced as battered women. The residents became more active and involved and began to have more confidence. In addition, their childrens' situations and the women's relationships with their children improved. Most left Munroe House to live independently of the men who had assaulted them; others returned home, but on different terms. In either case, women had found sources of support and assistance that would serve to reduce their vulnerability to further assaults.

It is clear from the residents' accounts that Munroe House can and does lay the foundations for women's greater social competence and independence of violent relationships.

5. B. The Effectiveness of Munroe House Policy and Structure:

The day to day operation of the House, the policy, and the decision-making structure are all working effectively, according to the accounts of the residents and current members of the Advisory Committee.

5. C. The Response to Munroe House by Community Resources:

We want to note here the views and recommendations of various Community Resources - agencies and institutions- that have had contact with Munroe House. The agencies and institutions that responded to the questionnaire (see Appendix I) represent four categories of services; Housing services (three organizations responded); Health services (one organization responded); Legal services (one response from a lawyer) and

the Ministry of Human Resources (five responses). The frequency of the contacts with Munroe House depended on the service offered: among the Ministry of Human Resources respondents the number of contacts reported ranged from "sometimes several times daily" to once every month; housing service responses ranged from "few contacts" to "at least every week;" the health service reported "seven or eight times in the past few months;" and the legal services respondent stated there had been contact with Munroe House "about six times."

The comments made by the Community Resources representatives on their contacts with Munroe House, were, without exception, positive. They focussed both on the quality of the Munroe House staff, and their advocacy on behalf of the residents, and on the Munroe House program in general. Comments such as "I was always pleased with the program and saw it as invaluable for the women it serves" and "a much needed and well run service" were typical.

Respondents to the questionnaire also offered suggestions or recommendations which we note here for the information of the Advisory Committee members and staff. Five respondents, including representatives of each of the four categories of service, stressed the need for more programs/services such as Munroe House provides. Also mentioned was the need for Munroe House to have a vehicle to help the residents with their moving. One Ministry of Human Resources respondent suggested it would be beneficial to have more contact with Munroe House on a regular basis.

The bulk of the suggestions centred on the issue of housing. As one Human Resources worker said, the residents of Munroe House face major difficulties in leaving the House and finding their own accommodation due to the current housing shortage and the discrimination they encounter against "single mothers on welfare." Suggestions included pressuring the Ministry of Human Resources to increase the shelter allowance and changing the policy of the B.C. Housing Management Commission to give single mothers on welfare a priority status.

5.D. Limitations to the effectiveness of Munroe House.

In reviewing the functioning of Munroe House, it is important to be realistic about what such a program can be expected to, and does, accomplish. Although Munroe House is a unique and highly beneficial service for battered

women, the residents of the House face many problems that women in this society generally face. These problems are outside the mandate and control of the Munroe House program. However, in setting up such a program there is a tendency to overlook many of these issues. Some Advisory Committee members, for example, expected Munroe House to help its residents to gain independence - financially and/or emotionally (see Chapter 3, page 10). While it is clear most residents did, in fact, increase their independence during their stay at the House, women's social and economic dependence in our society is a reality. Marriage, or at least a relationship with a man, is still considered by society to be a primary goal for a woman and the key to her identity. If a woman does not work outside the home and her husband has a paid job, she is dependent on him financially (Report by the National Council of Welfare, 1979, page 18). Statistics compiled by the federal government show that for women who are employed outside the home the average wage paid to a woman is only 60% of the average wage paid to a man (MacLeod, 1980, page 33).

As the interviews with residents show, battered women's social and economic dependence on their husbands is re-enforced by violence. For these women to be free from this violence, however, means that they are 'free' to confront the problems facing women generally. If a woman leaves the man who assaulted her and sets up a new home with her children, she becomes a single mother, which cannot be considered to be a financially 'independent' state. One of the Munroe House workers has suggested that, if it is successful, staying at the House should lead to a woman being "a woman with problems like everyone else's - not so intense."

Lack of protection, housing and income are the major problems that remain for women, in spite of the benefits of their stay at Munroe House.

(i). Protection:

Although Munroe House residents took action to protect themselves against further assaults, their protection unfortunately is not assured. The legal options open to battered women under both federal and provincial laws, do not necessarily protect them, even if they have left the violent relationship (MacLeod, 1980, p.46). Law enforcement and justice system policy and practices must be revised to give priority to protection for the woman in wife assault cases.

(ii) Housing:

As representatives of community agencies and institutions pointed out, housing is a major problem for women leaving Munroe House. Finding suitable, affordable housing for themselves and their children is a difficulty most single mothers face. The current housing shortage in Vancouver intensifies the problem. The suggestions, made by representatives of various agencies (noted on page 31), to increase the Ministry of Human Resources shelter allowance and to give women with children a priority status with the B.C. Housing Management Commission would improve the situation somewhat.

(iii) Income:

Adequately paid employment for women is scarce. For ex-Munroe House residents who are single mothers with young children, the lack of child care is a severe obstacle to working outside the home. More childcare services are clearly needed.

If a woman's only sources of income are a former husband or the government, she will almost certainly be destitute (Report of the National Council on Welfare, 1979, p.12) Welfare rates must be increased to enable single mothers to provide adequately for their families.

These issues require the continued attention of not only those individuals involved in Munroe House, but all those people who are working to address the issue of wife assault and to provide assistance and services to battered women.

6. APPENDICES

APPENDIX I - INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION

Munroe House Research

Interview Guide for Residents

1. What's it like living at Munroe House?

   (expand: what's an average day; what were you expecting when you came; what's good/bad about being here;...)

2. re: Family background:

   why they got married; when; what she expected of marriage; had she lived on her own before marriage (relationship); religion...

3. Circumstances of the beatings/abuse:

   - when did they/it start; under what sorts of circumstances; frequency; what he said/accused her of as a reason for the beatings/abuse; (effects of pregnancy, alcohol, jealousy, not allowing her to have friends, etc.)
   - kinds of abuse - physical, psychological, threats against her, forced sexual activity...
   - did his violence go beyond her - to the child(ren); sexually; ask about his relationship with the kids generally;...
     - outside the home

4. How did you feel? How did the specific incidents or the assaults generally make you feel? And, if "depressed", what's that like for you?

5. How did she leave/what made it possible for her to leave?

   - when (i.e. to Transition House); circumstances; had she left before; had she tried to get help before(specify); who was helpful (social worker, friend(s), family, Doctor, Transition House worker(s), clergy...); is relationship over - is he trying to contact her or is she thinking of going back or is he harassing her; arrangements re: visitation rights of child(ren); money...

6. What are her feelings now?

   - since being at Transition House and Munroe House.
   - needs that are or are not being met.

7. What is she worried about/afraid of?

8. A. What is your relationship like with your children?

   B. What is your worst time with them?

   How do you handle that? What do you do when you're angry with them?

   C. (i) Do your kids know why you're here at Munroe House?

   (ii) How do your kids feel about their father (i.e. woman's husband) now?

9. What would she like her life to be like 3 months from now?

   - where to live, employment, courses, etc. for her and for child(ren).

FACE SHEET

Intake Number_____

Name: _____

Previous Address: _____

Husband's Name: _____

Address: _____

Person to Call in Case of Emergency: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Comments/Suggestions of Transition House Workers at Time of Referral:

MUNROE HOUSE - RESEARCH FILE SHEET

Number on Intake Card or Referral Sheet: _____

Total Length of Stay: _____ date arrived: _____ date departed: _____

Age of woman: _____

Number of children: _____ Ages of children: _____

Married: _____ Common-law: _____

Language(s):	Spoken	Understood	Read	Write
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____

Ethnic Background: Woman's _____ Man's _____

Citizenship Status: Canadian Born _____ Naturalized Citizen _____

Immigrant Status: Sponsored _____ Relationship to Sponsor _____

Nominated _____ Relationship to Nominator _____

Independant _____ Refugee _____ Minister's Permit _____

Financial resources at present: a) S.A. _____ b) U.I.C. _____

c) working (specify: VIP,...) _____ d) dependant on husband _____

e) other (specify) _____

Job skills and/or work experience (list): _____

_____

_____

Education: a) grade school _____ b) high school _____ c) university _____

d) technical school _____ e) other (specify) _____

f) are you taking classes (specify) _____

Is there anyone you can call on to help you? Yes _____ No _____

Who?: a) friend _____ b) relative _____ c) Minister _____ d) Professional _____

e) other (specify) _____

Is your husband looking for you; wanting reconciliation; threatening vengeance... _____

_____

Why are you at Munroe House?: a) battering_____ b) psychological abuse _____

c) other (specify) _____

How long had you been in the relationship? _____

How long had you been in the relationship when the beatings started? _____

Did anyone see? _____ Did they help? _____

_____

How often did the violence occur? _____

_____

_____

What physical injuries have you sustained as a result of the battering _____

_____

STRIKING DIRECT STATEMENTS (in Residents' own words):

re: history of family violence (specify: father beat mother, was beaten/abused as child, etc): _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

re: ways the woman was isolated (from friends, family, community, etc.): _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

re: description of psychological abuse: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

re: any forced sexual activity: _____

re: why did she (want to) come to Munroe House: _____

Have you ever left before going to Transition House? Yes _____ No _____

Where did you go? _____

Have you ever had medical treatment? a) hospital _____ b) family doctor _____

c) Self treatment _____ How many times? _____

Are you taking medication? _____

Do you have allergies? _____

Do you have a special diet? _____

What do you want to do while you're at Munroe House?: _____
(include programs, courses, etc., if appropriate)

re: Child(ren): _____

Personal Interests: Mother: _____

Child(ren): _____

SERVICES CONTACTED AND USED BY RESIDENT DURING HER STAY:

S.W.: MHR Region_____ Date requested_____
Date of first appointment_____

Family Support Worker: Date requested_____
Date of first appointment_____

Project Parent: Date requested_____
Date of first appointment_____

Post Partum: Date requested_____
Date of first appointment_____

Women's Support Group: Date requested_____
Date of first appointment_____

U.I.C.: Yes_____ No_____

Manpower: Retraining_____
Upgrading_____
Other courses (specify)_____

Immigration:	Requested	Granted	Refused
English Language Training			
MOSAIC or Translator Service			
Immigration Services			

Other Services: Homemaker_____
Day Care_____
Other_____
_____

Legal: Family Court Counsellor_____
Private Lawyer_____
Police_____
Other Legal (specify)_____
_____
_____

Separation agreement:
started_____
not started_____
Restraining Order: Yes___No_____
Custody Order: Yes___No_____

Housing:	Successful	Unsuccessful
YWCA Housing Registry		
Red Door		
B.C. Housing		
Newspaper		
Other (specify)		

Medical: Doctor_____ Hospital Emergency_____ Reach Clinic_____ Dentist_____
Public Health_____ Pine Free Clinic_____ Women's Health Collective_____
Other (specify)_____

Mental Health: Psychiatrist_____ Psychologist_____ Riverview_____
Community Care Team_____ General Hospital Out Patient's Psych._____
Counselling (specify)_____

NEEDS ON ENTRY (Munroe House worker's comments):

WHERE DID THE WOMAN GO WHEN LEAVING MUNROE HOUSE?

a) New apartment or house (specify - in Vancouver or not) _____

b) B.C. Housing _____ c) Home, husband left _____ d) friends _____ e) relatives ___

f) Home to husband - change, because e.g. he says he will get counselling; has joined A.A.; etc. (specify) _____

g) Home to husband - no change _____

h) unknown _____

NEEDS ON LEAVING MUNROE HOUSE INCLUDING SUGGESTIONS FOR FOLLOW-UP (Munroe House worker's comments): _____

Munroe House Research

Interview Guide

for Advisory Committee and Staff

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1. Assumptions about wife-battering.

2. Why did Munroe House come into existence?

3. Major problems in setting up Munroe House.

4. Expectation of what Munroe House can do/should do.

5. For Munroe House to be successful what should it achieve? i.e. what gains/benefits should women residents get from Munroe House.

6. How does Munroe House work?
   (a) how are decisions made?
   (b) how is policy made?
   (c) an average day? (staff question)

7. (A) What do you see as your role? (re: Advisory Committee)
   (B) What do you do at Munroe House?

8. Community resources that are helpful/not...

[7(B) for Munroe House staff only]

QUESTIONNAIRE TO DOCUMENT THE RELATIONSHIP OF COMMUNITY AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS TO MUNROE HOUSE

Name of Agency/Organization: _____

Date Questionnaire was completed: _____

1. Please describe your contact with Munroe House using the following headings as a guide:

   A. How often have you had contact with Munroe House (approximately)?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   B. What has been the nature of the contact?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   C. Who initiated the contact?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   D. Please provide below any comments you wish to offer regarding your contact with Munroe House:

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. What services, programs, or other assistance can you or your agency/organization provide to Munroe House residents?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

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3.A. Does your organization/agency have a mandate, objectives and/or policies related to wife assault or battered women? YES_____ NO_____

B. If so, please provide below a brief outline of them:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

C. Please provide below any comments you wish to offer on your organization's/ agengy's mandate, objectives, or policies:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4.A. What are your suggestions for improving your own services or assistance to battered women?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

B. What are your suggestions for improving the services provided by Munroe House?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Please provide below any additional comments you wish to make:

APPENDIX II - CASE HISTORIES

CASE HISTORY #1

When I left my parent's home I lived with my girl friend, an older woman whom I had known since I was ten. She was like a second mother to me. I was working when I got pregnant with (daughter). There was no idea that I would marry him, I don't know where he is. I went on welfare and was living on my own with (daughter). When she was six months old I met (husband). He was a friend of my brother. We started living together when (daughter) was about one year old and moved into a basement apartment. We got married because I was four months pregnant with his child.

I expected everything would change when we got married - this baby would be his. He had been beating me all the time. He laid off for a while when I was pregnant and for a couple of months he was good to the kids and me, then he started drinking again.

He started beating me when we lived common-law and (daughter) was small. He beat me after drinking. Never hit me sober - that I can remember. He would beat me once or twice a week but it got worse and we were arguing a lot. He accused me of going out with guys. He would get mad if I went to my girlfriend's with the kids for a couple of hours. He expected me to stay home no matter what.

The abuse was mainly physical. He forced me to have sex with him just once. It was after a fight he tried to rape me - told me to go to bed and that he wanted it tonight. I said forget it. That night he pulled my underpants off and attacked me.

He was violent to both kids. He would hit them when they were crying. He was really mean to (daughter) - spanking her black and blue. To my knowledge he never sexually molested her but he talked about how sexual he was becoming. Once I asked him to put some cream on her when she was "sore inside." He didn't want to and then did and said, "You should have seen her eyes." He was happy when the kids were good. He would play with (daughter) if I asked him to.

One Friday night after getting paid he was drunk. He came home early, banged on the door, and said, "Come here you bitch and open the door." I did and he started complaining about (daughter) being on the patio. He called her inside. I was in a good mood. He sat down and asked me what time it was. He said he'd walk with us to get (daughter's) haircut. I asked him to get cleaned up and we started yelling. (Daughter) was getting scared.

He came up to me while I was holding (son) and pushed my chin up. He said we were going to a movie because there "was a lot of fucking in it." I asked him not to talk like that in front of (daughter). He sat down and then he came charging towards me. I said, "Leave me alone because I'm feeding the baby." He started smacking me and (son) ended up on the couch crying - I'm not sure if he hit (son) or not. He sent (daughter) into her room and started smacking me around a lot. I pushed him and he fell. Then he got up and started throwing things around. I picked up (son), lit a cigarette, and was rocking (son) back and forth when he came at me again, pushed me against the wall and I bumped the baby's head. I went to the bathroom with (son) and felt I had to get out of there. I got (son's) bottle and diapers. (Daughter) said, "Don't go without me." I ran down the hall and he said, "Come back, I won't do it again." I went to the caretaker's suite. I told the police what happened and the Constable said they really didn't want to get involved. They went and talked to (husband) and asked him if he wanted to go to a marriage counsellor. He said yes and the police came and told me. I said I wasn't going home. Eventually I phoned the Crisis Line and they got in touch with Transition House. Transition House phoned me back and I took a taxi there.

Also, on the night before this he had a butcher knife in his hand and said he was going to cut (son's) foreskin off. He has also pointed a knife at me in the past.

I did leave him before for seven months when we were living common-law. I went and lived with my Mum for three weeks and then got my own place for a few months. My friend's sister lived in (small town) and introduced me to a friend of hers. I lived with him there for a few months but he was mean to (daughter). (Husband) got hold of the phone number and phoned me saying he had quit drinking and that I should go back. When he came looking for me, I was packed but he had been drinking. (Friend) told me not to go. I said I'd go if (husband) promised to quit drinking. He started drinking heavily again when I was back.

I now have a lawyer and he has obtained interim custody, interim maintenance and we are making arrangements for me to have half of the furniture. I have agreed to supervised access weekly for the two children, but I am hoping he will not come, because he has been drinking. I am afraid of him coming around, worried about him getting visiting rights, but I will try it for a few weeks, in order to get the furniture. I will

do without support if necessary rather than let the visits continue.

I now feel more relaxed and that. It's a lot better to have my own money too. All my needs are being met - everyone is being good to me. I haven't done without anything. When I came to Munroe House I was expecting to meet all the women - have my own suite, meet and talk to the workers about the problems. It's enjoyable here when there are no upsets in the House. It's very different from living at home - more relaxed. There is no beating and fighting. It's nice having my own suite.

Three months from now I would like to be completely settled in a suite; have (daughter) in play school; have my legal problems sorted out. Living on welfare scares me but I know I can make ends meet.

CASE HISTORY #2*

(Woman) arrived at Munroe House (date). She had been living in a motel since arriving from (out-of-province city), and the transition house there. She had left her husband, taking her two sons, 10 and 7 with her.

(Woman) and (husband) were married in 1975, that is, after the birth of both sons. The marriage was undertaken to end the hassles they had had with the National Revenue over Income Tax.

(Woman) has graduated from high school. Her husband would not allow her to go to university, although she wanted to. He said that school was for kids, not married women.

(Husband)'s brother lives in Vancouver. He knows that (woman) is here with her children, but he has not seen the children yet. He does not know where they are staying. (Woman) does not feel very trusting of anyone and is unwilling to risk the brother's telling her husband where she is.

(Husband) calls himself a business man, "the president" of the business that he and (woman) built up. It is a janitorial service, with government contracts. He has filed a motion in the (other province) court which is intended to counteract (woman)'s request for a legal separation, he alleges that since she left the province it should be denied. He "expects me back..."

(Woman) read me a letter she had received from a friend in the east. The friend clearly thinks that (Woman) has done the "right" thing in leaving (husband), especially for the happiness and well-being of the children. The friend related that (husband) is very angry and searching around for people he can get information from regarding (woman)'s whereabouts. (Woman) describes him as a real guilt-tripper (although she does not use those words). "He's got emotional problems..." (Husband) is illiterate, cannot read or write. He immigrated from (foreign country) at age 20. He is now in his 40's.

The school that the boys attended told (husband) that the transfer slips had gone through to Vancouver, even though they had been requested not to.

"He had a habit of playing with the children's genitals." (Woman) mentioned this because she wants this information used in court to make sure that her husband had no access to the children.

She was with this man for almost 11 years, gave up her own apartment to move in with him. She was 7 months pregnant and had considered going into an unwed mother's home to give birth. She had about decided to keep the baby. (Husband)

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* This interview was recorded in the third person.

would not hear of her doing that. He insisted that she move in with him, to cut costs. "He said, I shouldn't have to pay for an apartment..."

I asked (woman) when the first beating took place. "I really don't know...a lot a blanks, I can't say...he was abusive otherwise [by which she means verbally]...three weeks after I met him -- actually I didn't want to hang around with him at all, I wanted him to leave..." He was jealous of (woman)'s time with others. She wanted to have a portrait taken as a present for her mother. He accused her of seeing other men, said that "All I wanted to do was go fuck."

I asked about the first time (woman) left her husband. "Actually the first time...I left so many times, even before I had the first baby, during the pregnancy, somehow he'd persuade me to come back."

In the spring of 1970, his ex-girlfriend's brother laid an assault charge against (husband), the pressure of this charge was used as an excuse to keep (woman) with him.

I asked (woman) about her initial expectations about her relationship with (husband). "I thought I could take it or leave it...His nephew from his [first] wife's side told me to leave...longer you stay the harder it will be to get out..." (Woman) was pregnant with no support when she first moved in. (Husband) got angry with her for considering (home for unwed mothers). She felt that she should check out her options, and pay close attention to what choices she could make, "after all, it was my baby..."

(Woman) had trouble during the pregnancy, she bled often.

I asked whether or not she had been beaten while she was pregnant. (Woman) did not answer directly, "He did talk about me leaving...he didn't care he said... But when I left the next day...he went and cried to my sister and she told him where I'd gone. [this was the first time she'd left him since she moved in, she was 8 months pregnant]. He showed up, I was so surprised...he came to pick me up, he told my brother I'd gone crazy...He refused to get involved [the brother] he had his own family..."

(Husband) often hit (woman) in front of others. Some people tried to restrain him, and others were 'embarrassed and never came back.'

I asked about injuries. 'Bruises, I didn't ever have any broken bones, or anything like that.' "He always made sure no one could see, he used his hands,... and he was real good with his feet..."

I asked if the children had seen her beaten: "Oh yeah, often, both of them.'

I asked how often the beatings had occurred. "I was intelligent enough to forego a lot of beatings..." [By which she meant that she spent a lot of time and energy second-guessing (husband)]. "Towards the end, he couldn't really beat me, cause I'd walk out, and he'd be short one very reliable employee... I paid attention to what he wanted, I'd even get up from the toilet..."

(Husband) threatened, "screaming obscenities, insults..."

Beatings occurred most often in the middle part of the relationship. Both children were little, and " I had so much work with the kids,...he didn't like all the attention to the kids."

(Woman)'s father never hit mother [she seemed shocked that I would ask this]. "She told me she would never put up with it..." (Woman) didn't get spanked too often. "They said I was too skinny and small." None of the children were beaten. "My father had violent outbursts, he locked horns with his sons...He expected more from them...he was good with us [the daughters]. ...He never provided adequated housing...not very successful farmer...Didn't seem to comprehend a lot of things. He was concerned to look to what other people thought..." Mother died recently. Father is still alive, but there's no contact now, "I don't know who I can trust...they're all such big flaps..." [they will tell where she is. Husband uses guilt and tears to get information from the others.]

"I couldn't have my own friends...he'd keep me so busy at home...just no time." There was always the possibility of injury, "He'd hurt me before...sometimes I could make him change his mind the odd time."

"He said I was ugly, had a big nose, I was crazy, so I made an appointment with a psychiatrist...There was times I found the salt and pepper in the fridge... your mind is just too full of fudge to think straight." "The psychiatrist said I wasn't crazy but needed marital counselling." "I never wanted to kill myself, but I want to kill him." "He did accuse me of food poisoning...he was sick, and thought I was trying to kill him since we'd just finished getting married..." (Husband)'s brother was living with them at the time, he didn't speak too much English, but used to ask his brother to be easy on (woman), and not to hit her.

I asked whether or not there was coerced sexual intercourse: "Often... he'd wake me up in the middle of the night, shove here goes...he'd just lay on top of me...I like to sleep on my stomach...At three in the morning, just not my time...no pleasure at all...I tried...maybe he'd smarten up."

"I never really like it, he would always talk about the other women and their big asses..." I asked if she thought sex might ever be good for her "I don't know what is possible, astrologer said I'd be married again after 32..."

When (woman) left she went most often to her family, and (husband) would find her there. "...once called the Y, got as far as my sister's apartment...she was mad..cause she said you just go back to him anyway...couldn't possibly leave the kids with him...he's such a jackass."

I asked about hospitalization: "No, but thought I did once, got a thump on my head, and he broke my glasses...He expected me to wear long hair...One day he wanted an extra piece, a little bit, we were in the bedroom downstairs, so I had him, and then went right out for a haircut." (Woman) traded sex for permission to do things she wanted -- like have short hair.

During the first pregnancy (woman) had frequent vaginal infections "... caused by him...something else." (Husband) did not, she says, sleep around. Her doctor "couldn't understand how we stayed together."

"I used to psych myself out .. used to drink a bit, but not much...used it as a pacifier...virtually a prisoner, you can't get out." (Woman) was taking phenobarbs (saved from 1975 when her husband got them for "his nerves.") in the morning and drinking martinis at night just before she left. She has stopped.

"I want to live my highest every hour of the day..." "I would hope every step [for children] would be in the direction of happiness." I asked if (woman) had left her husband for her children's sake, "Yes, I did. I could see what it was doing to them. They really like this..."

Until all her legal problems are solved (woman) doesn't know what she wants to do otherwise.

I asked what (woman) felt she needed and was not getting, she said her boys had asked that if there are childcare people that one person be assigned to them, because the younger children take all the attention and they cannot play with the 'baby-sitter.' "They tend to be overlooked, especially if they are quiet."

I asked if the boys had ever hit her, she said they had, but that she tried to solve problems with them without violence. (Youngest son)"gets nervous." She wants them to learn to tell her what they want, and if she can provide it she will. She seems a confident, if somewhat harried mother.

(Woman) has found books on marriage breakdown, and divorce useful to read.

Just at the end of the interview I asked (woman) if she had worked before her marriage. She worked as a nurses' aide,which she liked for a while. She shared apartments off and on with girlfriends, and sometimes lived alone.

We talked a little more about (husband). In the time before she left his threats got heavier and heavier, she was more and more fearful. (Woman) related an incident where (husband) had taken up a big knife and come towards her, she got a knife too and he put down his knife. He seemed surprised that she had done that, and behaved in a conciliatory way.

(Woman) feels murderously angry with her husband, and would like him to be dead. She is fearful that he will snatch their children. (Woman) is seeing (lawyer) and took her 26 pages about the breakdown of their marriage. She said she had remembered more things during this interview. (Woman) seems to have a hard time talking about herself, she is more willing to talk about her husband, and her children. She gets migraine headaches. She works through the VIP program.

CASE HISTORY #3

I thought my family was okay. My dad worked a lot; my mum helped build up the business. He wasn't around a lot, he was a sportsman. I never saw them fight. They're separated now. My dad was going on trips and mum didn't go with him - I guess he met his girlfriend. He gradually moved out of the house. (Husband) and I were separated then and I was busy with my own life with (son).

The only violent incident I can remember occured when I was going to run away. I got mad at my mum because she wasn't going to let me go out. I took off anyway. I came back around suppertime and my dad said, "What's the big idea of running away." I said she wouldn't let me go out and that I was going to run away. He took a big conveyor belt and beat me - he broke my finger but I never told them. That's the only time I remember getting spanked, seemed like a beating to me. He sent me to my room, then a little while later, said "come on down and have supper." When he gets drinking and he gets mushy, he tells me he's sorry about the past - he's probably talking about the beating.

I met (husband) when I was 15. He was going out with a girlfriend of mine, but I stole him, stupid me, and we just clicked together. He's four years older than me. We broke up once. He was working hard at his job and had no time, and he broke it off. Another time I caught him with his ex-girlfriend, necking, hickies all over his body, he said, "Oh, I wasn't screwing around on you."

I moved to (small town) to take a vocational course when I was 16. I got pregnant. The police caught (husband) and me in the back seat of a car with all our clothes off. I was under age. (Husband) went to jail and they took me home. Good thing my father was out or he'd have been out with a shotgun. My parents made me have an abortion - that or (husband) was going to go to jail. (Husband) knew, and he didn't like the idea, but I didn't want him in jail.

I wanted a baby, I wanted to be a mother, so we ran away for two months. We had an awful trip with another couple. We camped and headed east. We got as far as Alberta, then the car broke down. Someone had sold us a heap. We spent a lot of days trying to get welfare, it was just awful. We stayed at the Y, found odd jobs and managed to make it back home.

When we got back (husband) finally bought me an engagement ring - I

dragged him down there because I was pregnant with (son). I was pregnant when we got married. I didn't know anything about birth control. Besides, I wanted a baby. I wanted to marry (husband). I always wanted to be a mother. I figured it would be a real happy thing. I sure turned out to be wrong. We were happy before we were married and I figured it would stay the same. We lived with my parents just after we were married, then we moved to our own apartment and he started screwing around. I think he was working for my dad then. I felt hurt and rotten and I didn't want to have sex with him because I was getting big and fat and ugly, so I couldn't blame him. Mind you, to catch him was another thing. I heard him and I knew it was him.

As soon as (son) was born, (husband) got abusive. He was abusive a lot, either that or he wasn't home half the time. He wanted sex - I wasn't the kind that was good at inventing things. He was smoking pot then too. I really got pissed off and up tight, I was really against that. When I'd want sex, he'd be passed out. He was constantly screaming at my housecleaning and the way I raised my kids. He blamed me for everything.

Once we had one hell of a fight. I fought back. I started hitting him and he pushed me away, I guess so he wouldn't hit me - I don't know what it was about. This was when I left him, before (second son) was born. He wasn't coming home every night.

He would be violent with the children only when he got really mad at them for not being quiet, he'd tell them to "fuck off." He hit them good a couple of times for being too noisy or for mouthing off.

He had quite a few fights. Some guys coming out of a pub one night were mouthy at us. The boys went after them and beat the living shit out of them. I thought they'd been nice - jealousy rides again. He was in a few fights outside our house - some guys were bugging us because we were new on the block and (husband) caught them one day and beat them up. I had to call the cops. He was in a pub one night and called and said he was on his way home. A couple of hours later I woke up and he was there - he had his face really badly beaten. He said some guys beat him and left him. I took him to the hospital.

On the day I left him for good, (husband) was pissed off with me because the night before I wouldn't have sex with him. He got up and fed the kids breakfast. He'd been drinking and it was about ten in the morning. I went down and he started calling me down in front of the kids. He said he was

going to buy a whore, he told me to fuck off, he called me really rotten names then he passed out on the couch. My mom was getting her car fixed and I was going to pick her up. (Husband) asked where I was going and he said, "Boy you jump just like that to do anything your mom wants, you fucking bitch" - always the sex thing. So I left with the kids. I was at my mum's and he kept calling. He was crying and calling me a bitch. He said he needed help and I told him he should seek help. He got mad. I didn't want to go home, but I had to, I don't know why. I warned (son) that his dad was in a bad way and that he was to run and get someone to call the police if he started to hit me. I was planning to leave, lucky (husband) wasn't there. I phoned my brother-in-law and my mum and they both said, "You should go before he gets home." So I called Emergency Services and they sent me to the transition house. I was very scared that something was going to happen. I just felt I had to do it or something rotten was going to happen.

The relationship is over, I hope. My heart's with him, like I feel sorry for him, but I'm too scared to go back.

When I came here I thought Munroe House was going to be like the other transition house, with lots of people around, coming and going and whatnot. I feel relaxed here because I don't have to worry about my husband coming around here, or anyone else. A normal day at the House begins with feeding the kids breakfast at 6:30 or 7:00. Sometimes I let them get their own. Then I send (son) to school, and my younger son and I go back to sleep and get up around 9:30 or 10:00. That's when I go see people or go shopping; otherwise I just sit around and that is very, very boring. When (son) gets home, he's either with me or (childcare worker). Then I make supper, the boys play around and I put them to bed. Then I sit and watch T.V., or I go out someplace - it depends on which day it is. If it's nice I go to the beach, down to the playground area, before bedtime with the boys.

I feel more aware of myself now, I know what I want to do. I want to take my course, get my kids level-headed, and after my course, go to work. I'm afraid I'm not going to do it right - like raising the kids - I think it will be better once I get back in the house. I'm not nervous anymore. I don't have constant headaches anymore. I want to be fulfilled, my course done, my kids happy. I want to speak out more - not be chicken of anything.

CASE HISTORY #4

At the time I got married I felt I was ready to get married. I had already been in the relationship with him for two years. I didn't know what to expect from marriage. I had been on my own since I was 15. When I was going to school I lived with families or boarded with another woman. I didn't like living by myself but there were no schools near by where I lived for me to go to.

The beatings started when I had (son) and there was more responsibility and less freedom for both of us, especially me. Drinking was a part of it - I drank a little but he drank heavily and still does. We didn't really have a good relationship before we got married but he didn't beat me. I was studying so I couldn't go out much, but he would go out every night. We didn't talk much. I didn't feel there was a reason for the beatings. He'd get mad about anything. He would say I went out too much, didn't go out enough, his friends didn't like me - in other words he would always find some reason to beat me up. I was jealous of him (I am not anymore) because I was scared that he was meeting other women when he went out.

He would hit me drunk or sober if he was mad enough. There was lots of physical abuse and psychological abuse also. And threats. There was forced sexual activity before (daughter) was born but not since.

He was not violent to the kids. With (daughter) he "babies" her but with (son) he expects a lot.

He gets into lots of fights in the bars with outsiders. He is well known to the police.

I felt angry when he beat me. I would get depressed and sometimes took it out on the kids. "What's wrong with me?" I would think. I was afraid, not sure of myself. Lots of different emotional feelings.

I found out about Transition House from a friend at Al-Anon. Then I came to Munroe House. During the day while he was at work I just packed up and went. I had been thinking about it for a while. I had left before but always with an excuse, like "I am going to visit my family" or "I am going on a holiday." When I left that day it was raining. He had beaten me up a couple of days before and I had thought about it a lot. I'd left before but not like this. I was leaving for good this time.

I talked to a priest (my husband is Roman Catholic) and he said my husband would have to stop drinking and that there were no programmes for

families in the Church here. A psychologist suggested a marriage counsellor but he wouldn't go. He says he is not ready yet.

The relationship isn't over. I would consider going back if he stopped drinking and took care of himself. He comes over to see the kids and is okay to me. Starting in the fall he'll have visitation rights - two weekends a month with the kids. And support starts then also. We have signed a Separation Agreement.

My relationship with my children is okay on and off. It's not always easy. The worst time is when I feel trapped or frustrated - when I can't do something. I yell at them. Sometimes I spank them - I shouldn't. I feel guilty about that. (Son) knew why I was at Munroe House but (daughter) is too young. They've always been close to their father. (Son) was afraid of him before we left - they were crying a lot and were afraid. Now they are more easy going - they are more themselves and enjoy seeing him. They are excited when they know he is coming over. Sometimes he says he is taking them out and then changes his mind and they are disappointed.

When I left I felt it was time for me to work out my problems the best way I knew how. I wanted to find out what I could do to change my life for the better. To a certain extent I achieved this. I am aware of more things now than I was before - options about how to live my life. Before, I was afraid of myself - I was afraid of not making the right decision. I wasn't afraid of anything while at Munroe House except me.

When I came to Munroe House I expected to be in an apartment alone, but I found it okay. You are more involved with your neighbours, that was interesting - good and bad. An average day was doing shopping, scheduling appointments and being with the kids. I didn't like it when it was hectic but I enjoyed having people around to talk to. I didn't know what to expect when it was hectic.

I don't really know what I'd like my life to be like in the future. I am happy now I am back in my own place without my husband.

CASE HISTORY #5

I didn't have a close family. I lived in a foster home between the ages of two and nine. I was really close to them and I really loved them. They treated me like a daughter. My foster mother died when I was nine. I was dragged home by my father. There were lots of problems - my foster father wanted me back. My real family wouldn't let me contact my foster family. My foster family was English and my family spoke Japanese. I couldn't speak Japanese and didn't want to learn the language. There was nobody to talk to. My grandmother took care of me. My brother left home because he and my father didn't get on. I was 13 when Grandmother died. My stepmother and father lived upstairs and I lived downstairs all alone. I got into contact with my foster father when I was 13 and would sneak out and visit him. He became sick and died when I was 16. I would go to the hospital (it was during the summer holidays) and see him every day from 12 to 6 p.m. I would lie to my real father. A few months later I met (husband) at my first job where I worked while I was still in school.

I didn't tell my father I was seeing (husband). I didn't want to be with him but I didn't want to be alone. We ran off when I was 17. I finished grade 11 and got a job and an apartment for both of us - (husband) wasn't working. I was pregnant and I asked (husband) if he wanted to get married - he said yes. When my father found out I was pregnant he disowned me. (Husband's) parents agreed we should get married. (Husband) would work on and off. I quit work when I was nine months pregnant.

We always fought but always went out together. He was very possessive. He always wanted to know where I was. He was always phoning me while he was at work. He would come straight home and he would sleep. There was no communication, it was the same thing everyday.

When (son) was born, I tried to get back to my father. There was lots of verbal fighting between us. I was afraid he'd beat me up. He'd grab me and push me, push me into a room. I never had a key to the apartment - he said, "You don't need a key." I couldn't go out without him, even shopping. If I was on the phone when he phoned he'd be angry. I wanted to get a job but he wouldn't let me.

The beatings started three months after (son) was born. Anything would set him off. Mostly he said that I was babying (son). That I picked him up, kissed him, that I dressed him wrong. He would tell me what to feed

him. He bought everything, including my clothes when I was with him. He beat me up about every two weeks and he never drank.

We lived on a third floor walkup and had to share the bathroom and kitchen on the second floor. My father agreed I could come home but without the baby. He offered to take me to my stepmother's family. I told (husband) and he beat me up. I phoned my foster sister when he beat me bad and she took me and my baby in. I moved in with her and her husband helped me to get all my stuff. (Husband) found me the next day and beat in the door and broke it down. He was really crazy. We were hiding in the bathroom and had already phoned the cops. The cops took him away. They took me to a hostel which was a really bad place, mostly street women, I was the only one with a child. I felt awful and sorry for (husband) in jail. I got a friend to arrange for (husband) to get out of jail. She phoned my mother-in-law who was very upset. She got us back together again. It was okay for a couple of months and then my foster sister charged (husband) - I have never talked to her again. We were together for a couple of months and he lost his temper every day - beat me up every day.

My mother-in-law got involved. He was beating me up and my father-in-law intervened. (Husband) got a knife and chased his father and the cops came. He agreed to a divorce and then I was living at a transition House. The divorce was on and off, then he found a girlfriend. I was at the transition house for a couple of weeks and (husband) kept phoning me. He talked to another girl there and got her to sympathize with him. I left (son) with her one night as she had agreed to babysit and then she went out with (husband). I phoned the cops when I found (son) was gone. Nobody had custody and so I went to see (son) at my mother-in-law's. He would only give me a divorce if (son) stayed with my mother-in-law. He was living with his girlfriend. I was too ashamed to be on welfare so I was working on and off. I was 19 then.

The divorce came through and I was living with this girl. It was not a good situation. (Husband) didn't have a girlfriend. I would see him when I went to visit (son). I missed him and sometimes we'd go out together. I had a "fantasy" about getting back together. I went back with him for a year, then I left him again. I felt I deserved the beatings because I had left. I hurt him verbally but he hurt me physically. He said he'd only beat me because I complained, but he was going out every night. I left so many times that I can't remember them all - sometimes for a week,

sometimes for two or three days. He always found me when I left. When I was five months pregnant I knew this was to be the last time.

It was Easter at his mother's. I was ashamed to tell my mother-in-law that I was pregnant. He'd broken his foot playing rugby and he wanted to go out dancing. He went out and didn't come back for three days. I phoned the cops searching for him. I went home to look for him. He didn't have any I.D. Finally everyone was looking for him and eventually found him with a girlfriend. I was at my mother-in-law's and his brother forced him to phone me. I was crying on the phone - he just laughed. He had no money. Finally he came home and I went back to the transition house. He'd visit me. It went on like this constantly - going back together, beatings, splitting up, I'd charge him then drop it.

He was very jealous and possessive. Even jealous of (son) I think. He couldn't communicate. I had no friends at all. His abuse was always physical, never verbal. I was not supposed to have any opinions about anything. When he wanted sex, I just gave in. He was stubborn and sensitive. He just recently started to beat up other people but he never beat the kids. He was proud of being a father.

I felt degraded. Ashamed of having friends because I knew I would tell them that (husband) beat me up and they would know what was happening. I felt that I was a terrible mother and wife. I felt I deserved it because he said so. Everyone he knew beat up their women. I too thought it was normal - I provoked him.

I had changed him. He was weaker than me at the beginning, he would give me the money and I would pay for everything. I wanted him to have the responsibility. I gave him the money - I wanted him to be a stronger person.

The last time I left I went to a transition house in another city. The police had told me I should leave so I moved. He found me there. He'd send people looking for me. Someone there told me about Transition House in Vancouver and they even got my fare together and sent me out here.

When I first came to Munroe House I expected a lot of pressure, thinking I must find a place to live. It wasn't home to me. I was afraid I wouldn't be able to adjust. Now, I really like it, no pressure. I'm getting to know the city and I am adjusting to the situation of being alone, being a single parent. I am worried about not being able to cope with being a single mother.

My relationship with my daughter is very close. She is the only one I have left in the world. When I lose patience with her sometimes when she won't go to sleep or she is sick - that is my worst time. I usually give in to her and hold her or I leave her in her cot if I know she is okay. I stick myself in another room and read. If it doesn't work I let her run around until she's tired or take her to the beach. I stick her in the crib when I am angry with her. (Son) doesn't now why I left. My mother-in-law told him it was because his father beat me up - I don't like him knowing that.

On an average day at Munroe House I get up, get breakfast, go out with (daughter), taking my time, bake cookies, play with (daughter), read, go to the beach when it's nice, also, make welfare/manpower arrangements. I go to sleep late - go to bed when I feel like it. I put (daughter) to bed at 7:00, then I relax and talk to the other women. There is nothing bad about being here - knowing you have to leave is the worst. I haven't cried since I got here and I used to cry every night.

I want to get a new apartment and would like to go to school and put (daughter) into day care. I would like to meet new people and make some friends. I feel more relaxed now but I want a close friend, a woman, someone I can talk to about all sorts of things. Someone I can confide in. I feel very alone.

CASE HISTORY #6

I met my husband in 1972. I was sick and in the hospital and (husband) came every day. He decided what would happen - he decided we'd get married eventually and have children. I went along. I was totally infatuated with him, I guess in love with him. We waited about nine months. We met in December and got married in August. We lived together. I was supposed to go back to school in September, but I discovered I was pregnant. I lost the baby, I had a miscarriage, and one month later I was pregnant with (son).

I thought marriage would be the old fashioned thing, where two people fall in love, get married and have kids. I felt (husband) would always take care of me. He was always a big shoulder. I was really, really in love with him. His grandfather had a lot of weight to bear and he said, when he found out I was pregnant, "I hope you'll do the right thing," and I guess (husband) decided the right thing was to get married.

Normally he was pretty happy-go-lucky. Once a year he wanted to get it all out. I saw that from the beginning. Instead of taking a passive role in arguments, I wanted to win. Sometimes, when he saw that, he'd use his hand to make sure he'd win anyway. It started about a year after we were married. He started to give little hits across the head, nothing that would ever show - the head or the arms. In an argument I would try to get out the door. I knew if I could get out and walk around I would cool off and could talk rationally, so I would try to get out the door. He would block the door and that would make me crosser, so I would try to move around him. I guess I got into shoving, or just trying to get out. I didn't like feeling trapped. He'd start name calling. His favorite thing to call me was "selfish bitch." That hurt more than anything. I sure don't want to go back to that.

I used to get hit if I'd leave the room. I'd get hot, say a whole bunch of stuff and then I'd leave the room. He'd get angry. For example, I'd be in the bedroom, say a whole bunch of stuff and go sleep on the couch. He'd get up and come out. He'd keep on talking. I'd try to cool the situation, but he would keep on, until finally he would make me lose my temper and I would hit him, and he would take all his full force on me. I'd hit him just to make him be quiet. I'd go in the washroom and lock the door and he'd break the door down. All the time he was telling people

he was in control and he was just doing that to scare me. I'd say, "Well, you scared me all right."

When I was pregnant he still hit me. He just hit my head and arms. He threw me across the room once - I could never believe it. He can't seem to remember. He still doesn't seem to realize how bad it was.

At first the beatings really shocked me. I always fought back, I never just took it. I'd always pick up the nearest thing and clobber him back and I'd get it ten times more. Then I'd realize I was no match and seek help. It would always take days. I had bruises and I'd hide them. I was really embarrassed. I didn't want people to know because I thought it was a pretty "yukky" thing to have happen. He'd forget it the next day. He seemed to be able to kiss and make up, but for me it would take a whole bunch of days.

He would never hit the kids - only spank in discipline.

Once or twice a year he'd be in a fight in a bar. Because he was big, people would like to pick on him. A couple of times things would build up and he'd jump at the opportunity. I've never seen him go looking for a fight.

There was no sexual violence. Towards the end he wanted to do some things I didn't want to do - I said I didn't think it was right. It seemed like the whole sexual thing was falling apart. I blame it on his work - he was working in a decadent place.

I was really depressed. It was almost like I had no energy left to do anything. I was really sad - anything would make me cry. I really felt not worthwhile. I wished I had people around. I would see other people with good marriages and felt really lonely even though I was married.

When I left him I waited for a certain time I thought was proper. I was in touch with social workers and human resources. I couldn't leave while he was there so I waited until he was at work. It was a matter of living or dying and I think I realized how crazy I was maybe. I had left him once about three years before. We lived up the street from a hotel and our home was becoming an after-hours for his friends, and I didn't think it was proper. I was raising a child and I didn't like it and pulled out for those reasons.

My relationship with my kids is getting better. With (son) it is better, although he still has his moments and I still have mine. (Daughter)

has always been easy. We're all in our routine now, we're all learning. We get our breaks from one another. I get to do some things of my own. It's definitely upward, not like what it was. (Son) knows why we're here. He saw the hitting. I can remember times when he was really scared and he'd hide in the corner of his room, and I hated to see that. I've told him mummy and daddy can't live under the same roof and I think he's understanding. He knows (husband) sees other ladies and I see other men and there's a little static there, but I think he's understanding. He asks me if doctors get married, or firemen. He asks, "Mummy, do firemen get married?," I say "Yup," then he says, "Then I'm not going to be a fireman." He also says, "I don't want to fall in love." He used to ask these questions more often that he does now. He loves his father, he's glad to be around him and looks forward to seeing him. I hope that doesn't wear off. (Husband) sees (son) on a regular basis on weekends. He also takes both (son and daughter) once a month.

We have a good relationship now. We talk and see each other sometimes. He seems to think that I'll be back in a year, but I know we just can't live under the same roof anymore.

I feel a lot better about myself now. I'm really busy. I'm doing things which are interesting to me. Meeting people I like, getting involved politically. I'm getting into acting. I knew it was all out there, but just had to go out there to get it.

Munroe House is good. Number one. There's lots of support here - from the other ladies and from the people who work here. I really like the kids. I really like what's happening here. My days are varied. I take all the kids to school. I work three mornings a week and I have something planned for the afternoons. Every day I'm busy. The only bad thing about being here is that it isn't your own place. You have to abide by the rules - it's not your own responsibility. It feels like it's somebody else's and not yours yet. It still feels scary to be out there, and here at the House it's good, but I think I'm ready to make the jump. You need time to get there - the whole thing is time - you don't arrive at anything quickly, that's for sure.

I'm worried about finding a place. A place that's warm for the kids. I hope I can handle them on my own. I'm worried about the kids, hoping they're doing okay, especially (son). I'm hoping I'm keeping things

positive and not letting them go negative. I hope I can stay in one spot, I want to establish some roots. I'm going to winter it out here. I'm not sure if I'll be moving on from there.

I would like to be managing on my own and making it. Independent - not settled with anyone. I'm telling mysel' to go slow. I know there will be ups and downs but I think you can make choices and leave the negative and go with what is good.

CASE HISTORY #7

My first husband left me a long time ago when my children were all young. I started living with (husband) two years later but I didn't marry him until 1978. I hadn't lived alone very long before I married my first hsuband but was alone with the chidren between him and my present husband.

He started beating me up after (daughter) was born - about five years after we started living together, usually after he had been drinking. It wasn't very often - I don't really remember. Once he accused me of going with someone else because I was pregnant with (daughter) and he said he was sterile. But I hadn't been with anyone else and I told him so. He said that he was only testing me. I thought that it was very mean of him.

The abuse was mainly psychological after he stopped drinking. He didn't allow me to have any friends. He didn't say it but he never welcomed them over. He was always complaining and would verbally threaten to beat me up. He wouldn't speak if he didn't get his own way (sexually) so I used to give in and then he would speak to me again, and he would be all right.

He couldn't get along with the kids. Always arguing, and that's why (daughter from previous marriage) ran away. One night when she was drinking and arguing with him he hit her and she left home. He always wanted his own way, even with little things. He didn't hit the kids but was always argui g or shouting. He wouldn't let them work or do babysitting, even when the children lived next door. He wouldn't allow them to be independent in any way.

I always thought I should leave but I was too scared. I didn't know where to go as I had no friends - he had made sure of that by never making them feel welcome. When he hit me I was upset mainly, it wouldn't have done me any good to get angry - he would have got madder. I wasn't happy. I always wished I knew how to talk back but I never knew how.

I left him the first time about two years ago and (daughter) and I stayed at a Transition House. I was planning on leaving but he always used to go through mine and my daughter's purses and he found a letter that one of my daughters had written to one of her brothers telling him we were leaving. He confronted me. We left anyway, when he was at work. We went to see a social worker who told me about the Transition House. He was very nice and helpful. We stayed there about a month and then (husband) moved out and we went back to the house. Then we moved to a smaller place and he

would come and visit. Eventually he ended up staying and at first it was very nice. It was about a year before he ended up living with me again. Then after a few months it all started again. By this time we were married.

The reason I left this time, and for good, is because he wouldn't let me see my children from my previous marriage. He would get mad if they came over to visit and I made them a cup of tea. He threatened to kill them if they came over. He said I'd be sorry if they came over again. He was mean. I wouldn't tell him they came over then they would tell him. He'd get mad if I told him and mad if I didn't tell him. He wouldn't let my son stay over one night - he swore at me and got mad. He would never let them stay over. Now that I have gone, two of my children are living there - I don't know why he is doing that.

I went to Family Court and they phoned Transition House for me and I went right up there. The Court gave me a no-contact order, but he keeps trying to see me. Like last week when (daughter) came to my friend's house after her weekend visit with her dad, he asked me to come out to the car and speak to him. Once he sent flowers with (daughter).

We have an informal arrangement for (daughter) to spend the weekend with her father - she is happy to do this. I got (Munroe House worker) to talk to her about her relationship with her father as I was scared in case he tried anything sexual with her, I think he did with (older daughter) which is why she left. She told the worker that that was not the case and she was happy to go and see him. He buys her clothes and takes her to the PNE. He is not paying me anything but I have a lawyer now and I am proceeding with it and proper custody.

I get along well with all my children. When he is at work I phone and visit my older children. We went to the Sea Festival this year - we couldn't go last year because he wouldn't let us. I get along well with (daughter). When she goes I miss her. When she tries to get sassy and doesn't listen, then she annoys me and I talk to her about it. The first couple of times she went to visit her dad she was "bossy" when she came back. I left her alone for a while and then she went back to normal. He has money and she can get what she wants from him. He can do lots of stuff like the PNE. She wants me to take her but I won't. I don't have enough money and she goes with her dad, so she is not missing out. I told her that. She doesn't like me to go out, but I tell her that she goes out so

so can I. I don't like it when she doesn't listen. I don't yell at her or hit her. I try and talk to her. I didn't like it when people yelled at me so I don't yell at her. I told her that her dad won't let me see my other kids and that's why I left. She still loves him.

I don't regret leaving, but it's not easy to forget what he did. I feel freer and I don't have to worry about anything. I don't have to ask anybody. I was feeling lonely when (daughter) went to visit her father for a long weekend, but I went to visit (another resident) and she was happy to see me.

There is nothing I want or need that is not being met. I am happy here. I like living at Munroe House. I go to the beach, go shopping. I don't have to worry about anything, like who I speak with. I don't have to watch the clock. I don't know what I was expecting. The good thing is that I have met some very nice friends.

I am not thinking of going back to my husband. I am going to get my own place. He has promised me that I can have some of the furniture. I'm not afraid or worried about anything except about finding a place to live. I want to be settled down with (daughter) at school. I want her to be happy at school and to have lots of friends. I'll be a grandmother by then and I don't care if it's a boy or a girl, so long as I can see him/her and visit.

I have no plans to work, but I enjoy working as a cook's helper in a cafe. I did that once. Maybe I will be a homemaker - I like cleaning and looking after children. I will work part time if the welfare will guarantee the rent. I am worried that I couldn't earn enough to support us without welfare.

CASE HISTORY #8

I got married to get out of the house. My mother drove me nuts - she still does. I thought marriage would be a bowl of cherries. I thought I would change him. What a fool I was - there was no way he would change. I had never lived on my own before getting married. Both of us come from protestant christian backgrounds but he was not very religious - he says he is an atheist.

Right from the start there was a lot of verbal abuse. But soon it was physical and got much worse towards the end. It would happen when he had been drinking. Frequency is difficult to remember, but in the last six months it was on a weekly basis. He called me everything in the book: "lazy bitch," "whore," "all you do is sit on your ass" (I went to work when (son) was three weeks old and I worked the whole of the marriage - I had some months off, but always went back to work).

Really, there was no reason for the beatings. He would never talk to me, never discuss anything. There was little or no communication on his part.

He wasn't violent towards me when I was pregnant, but made me feel bad by saying things like "you look like a big fat cow," He had affairs during both my pregnancies - right under my nose.

I found later that I could cope if I had a drink. Lots of fights would take place because the alcohol would give me the nerve to say things.

I used to be jealous of him, but after about six years that wore off. He was extremely jealous of me. He would start fights if someone looked at me (or if he thought they had looked at me). He wouldn't let me wear certain clothes. He never allowed me to have single friends. Over the years we lost all our friends, single and married, except his "leeching" friends.

The abuse was physical and psychological - I've been threatened. He's threatened to drug the kids. He has said things like, "If you think (daughter) is safe, she isn't." Once there was forced sexual activity. That was after my surgery for my spleen - I had to have it removed after he had beaten me up.

His violence went beyond me - sexually to my daughter. He got her to fondle him sexually when I was in the hospital. He asked her to sleep in his bed and then started to "educate her sexually." He started to get

angry with (son). He resisted (son) making his own decisions. (Son) would also stick up for me and he didn't like that. He loves his kids but has a funny way of showing it. He never does anything with the kids. He figures material things are the answer.

He is frustrated if things don't go his way, and then he strikes out. His fights with others start verbally and he gets pretty low and the other person would get mad. He has been in lots of fights.

I felt vindictive when he beat me. I was going to get him and sometimes I did get some "good ones" in. I never felt guilty. I felt angry, very angry. Sometimes I provoked him, but it was justified. I never felt depressed. I wanted to talk about it but he wouldn't. There was no communication. If he wanted to start battling, I'd go right along, I didn't care.

I provoked him into assaulting me so that I could get him committed under the Mental Health Act. The RCMP came and they advised me to get out. They had been called in several times before by me or (son). They told me about Transition House and I phoned and went there and from there I've gone straight UP! I left once before, he's left twice and thrown me out once. I never tried to get help before, I wouldn't talk to anyone about what was happening. I went to a motel and then went back after about two weeks. Many people were helpful this time: doctors, counsellors at Transition House, RCMP, police, minister, my boss, probation officers, Lots of people supported me - including social workers.

The relationship is over. He is trying to contact me indirectly. He wants me back, but I'm not even thinking of going back. He is also indirectly harassing me. He turned up at my mother's house and tried to talk to me. He doesn't think it's serious. I am in the process of fighting for custody and I would allow supervised visits with the kids but they don't wish to see him.

My relationship with my kids is open and a good one. When I'm tired and they are acting up, I get irritable. Then I just yell at them and they know that I mean business. I go to bed usually, and then (son) will come and ask me if I want a cup of tea. I speak my mind and I say it and that is that. They know why we are here at Munroe House - I don't hide anything from them. I think (son) is angry with his father, maybe even hates him, and (daughter) is scared of him. I'm hoping they'll change once they realize that he is very sick. I don't want them to hate him.

I am feeling pretty good now. I feel positive, have a better outlook on life. I feel much better about myself. I feel better about my kids. I feel like a burden has been lifted off my shoulders. I am worried about my financial situation - my husband left me with large debts. I don't want to go into personal bankruptcy, but other than that I have no worries.

I didn't have any false expectations about Munroe House. I was told it was a large house with private suites and it is. It's private. It's like living on my own. It's just like my own place. I can't think that there is anything bad about it. If we didn't have places like this, where would we be? I work all day and I don't see much of the other people in the house. I get wound up working all day and then either go to bed when I get home or go out and visit my Mum. There is nothing I am not getting at Munroe House.

When I leave here, I would like to get settled down in my own home with my financial situation in order. I am already working, with a promotion on the horizon. I want the kids in school and back with their friends.

APPENDIX III

MOVING IN TO MUNROE HOUSE

Munroe House is a 'second stage' house. This project for battered women and their children is operated by the YWCA. Our hope is that during your stay at the House, the staff and the other residents will be able to help you and your family re-adjust to a new, non-violent life, which will be better for your children and for you.

There are some things about the House that we want you to know.

1. There are FOUR very basic rules: NO MEN
   NO EXCESSIVE DRINKING
   NO non-medical DRUGS
   Our STREET ADDRESS is a SECRET

2. Each family is responsible for the upkeep of their apartment.

   a. There is a vacuum cleaner that everyone can use. It is kept in the basement.
   b. There is a washer and dryer downstairs in the basement for you to use, its free.
   c. There is a list of the furniture and utensils contained in each suite, that we ask you to check over and sign. Please not that all the contents of each apartment are the property of the YWCA, and that they must remain here when you leave. We encourage you to add to these basic furnishings in order to make your apartment 'home.' Please notify the staff in case of breakages, or if you need something extra.

3. Your children are your responsibility. NEVER LEAVE THEM ALONE IN YOUR APARTMENT.

   The other women in the house will probably share child-care with you in case you must go our without them, and will ask that you offer the same priviledge to them when they need child-care.

4. The staff have master keys to all apartments and have the authority in case of emergency or extraordinary concern for your safety, to enter your apartment. We hope this will not be necessary. IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR EVERYONE'S SAFETY THAT YOU DO NOT PUT A DOUBLE LOCK ON THE DOOR OR JAM THE KEYHOLE.

5. Residents are requested to assist in maintaining the common areas of the house as well as checking up on the security of the house at night and on weekends.

   Every two weeks a resident take s on the responsibility for some maintenance task: such as: a. vacuuming the halls, b. tidying TV room, c. cleaning laundry room, d. cleaning windows in hallways, e. tidying up yard, f. sweeping basement stairs and basement, g. mopping front steps and clearing up walks.

6. The front door of the house is to be kept LOCKED AND CLOSED at all times.

   Children may play in the fenced in area -- they may go out only through the basement door. Whoever lives in the basement apartment will be asked to lock and check the basement door at night.

7. When no member of the staff is in the house IN CASE OF EMERGENCY ONLY please phone 734 5722 and ask that the on-call person be paged. There are emergency instructions on an orange paper in your apartment and near the phones.

8. There are many advantages to living in this area including: shops, supermarkets, banks, restaurants, the MHR office, a Native Indian Friendship Centre, Kits House (at 7th and Vine), Family Place at 10th and Dunbar, and of course the Beach and Pool Residents here also have access to the swimming pool and sauna at the YWCA for free with green passes (issued by staff).

9. During your stay at Munroe House you will receive a support cheque from the Ministry of Human Resources. You will have to apply to the Financial Aid worker at the MHR office on 4th Avenue for Income Assistance. It is your legal responsibility to report any changes in your financial status to your financial aid worker.

Page Two. Moving into Munroe House

10. The Munroe House staff will be on hand to assist you with legal and personal problems. Don't hesitate to talk to us.

House meetings, pot luck dinners, support group and individual planning/problem solving sessions are a regular part of the programme at Munroe House.

In addition various social outings and much fun are highly recommended.

11. Your mailing address is ... Your name
P.O. Box 33904
Postal Station D
Vancouver, B.C.
V6J 4L7

You can have your Family Allowance cheque mailed to this address as above (if they ask why you have a post box tell them you live in a shelter for battered women and that the street address is confidential.). A staff member checks the mailbox regularly.

12. It is essential, if the project is to be a success for you and others, that everyone respect the basic rules and regulations. Those who do not will be asked to leave. It is our hope that you and your children will enjoy your stay at Munroe House and find it to be an enriching new beginning.

WELCOME

I have read and understand this information and agree to abide by these policies:

Date _____

Signature of Resident _____

FW/110780

APPENDIX IV

THE ADVISORY BOARD OF MUNROE HOUSE HAS SET OUT THE FOLLOWING POLICY FOR ADMITTANCE TO MUNROE HOUSE:

All battered women with children can be admitted to Munroe House EXCEPT persons who:

1. Are currently chemically dependent (on any drug) or alcoholically dependent.

2. Have a recent history of violence to themselves i.e. may at present be dangerous to others or to herself

3. Presently has, or has had, a history of being in chronic need of support services and/or shows evidence of on-going chronic need. Where there is a probability of using extraordinary, extensive or multiple services.
   N.B. A disability which has made a prospective resident a long time user of social services will not rule out her living at Munroe House.

4. A woman whose children are at risk from the mother's abuse or severe neglect.

A battered woman is a woman who has come out of a domestic marital situation where there is direct violence or fear of violence and the woman and her children are in need of protection. The woman must have been beaten by a spouse (legal or common-law) not other family members. This includes situations where there is physical and/or psychological abuse.

MUNROE HOUSE is <u>not</u> a treatment or therapeutic home nor is it a recreational facility. The purpose of the programme is to:

a. Develop life skills and promote a healthy living style

b. to provide assistance with practical problem solving and personal conflict resolution as the women individually desire these supports.

The intent of the programme shall be to provide as many positive experiences as possible for the resident in her short stay at Munroe House. The women who come into the house should be those who might not otherwise receive service, women with the greatest need who have no/or limited life skills and are on Social Assistance.

When a vacancy occurs the Co-Managers will contact Vancouver Transition House and Pam Sleeth at the Ministry of Human Resources. Transition House is responsible for selection of women who go to Munroe House. If Transition House does not have any referrals within 5 days of the vacancy, other Houses will be notified. If there are still no candidates, it will go through the MHR workers.

Final decision re prospective residents lies with Arlene Gladstone, Director of Support Services at the YWCA. She will met with the Co-Managers of Munroe House and Transition House workers, in the event of disagreements about suitable resident referrals.

The length of stay at Munroe House is approximately 3 months.

May 1980

APPENDIX V

Profile of the Residents of Munroe House*

Age: The age range of the 11 residents was between 20 and 45 years. Seven women were in their 20's and three were in their 30's. The median age was 26.

Citizenship Status: Nine of the 11 residents were Canadian born and two were naturalized citizens.

Children: The total number of children residing at the House during the research period was 19. Nine residents had two children each (one of these women had only one child with her); one resident had five children but only one was with her; and one resident had three children, one of whom was with her. The ages of the children ranged from six months to 13 years.

Education: Four residents had completed high school. Five residents had completed grade school, and of these three went on to, but did not complete, high school. One woman did not complete grade school and one attended school between the ages of nine and 16 years. Four of the residents had gone on to take some sort of vocational training after they left school.

Job Skills: Among the job skills listed by Munroe House residents, service sector and clerical skills predominated. Two residents stated they possessed no job skills.

Financial Resources: Ten of the residents were receiving Social Assistance (three of whom were working through the Ministry of Human Resources,Volunteer Incentive Program). One resident had a full time job.

Support System: When asked (on entry) if there was anyone they could call on for help, four women stated they could call on relatives; two mentioned both friends and relatives; one stated a friend; one woman said she could call on her minister. Three women had no one they felt they could turn to for help and support.

Length of Relationship: The length of relationship ranged from one to 16 years. Four residents stated their husbands had assaulted them from the start; one woman reported she couldn't remember when the assaults started but her husband had been verbally abusive from the start. Three residents reported the assaults began after the birth of their first child and one woman, who had been verbally but not physically assaulted, said the verbal abuse began after the birth of her first child. One resident reported that physical assaults began after four years of marriage, when her husband's mother came to live with them. One woman who had only been in her relationship for one year had been assaulted twice, very severely. Nine of the women had left their husbands at least once previously; two of them had gone to transition houses on those occasions.

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* The information in this profile was taken from the Research File Sheets filled out for each of the 11 residents. Three of these 11 women declined to be interviewed.

Reasons for Leaving: When asked why they were at Munroe House, five women reported they had suffered both battering and psychological abuse. Four women reported battering only, but in direct statements all four commented on isolation and criticism by their husbands. Two women reported psychologcial abuse only - one of whom had been battered previously in her relationship and one who left when her husband was drinking heavily and threatening her.

Injuries received ranged in severity from bruises and black eyes to a ruptured spleen and attempted murder with metal clippers. Four of the women had had hospital treatment for their injuries.

Reports of psychological abuse included: name calling; derogation of their abilities to look after the house and children; intense scrutiny of their day to day activities; ridicule in front of friends; and threats. All eleven residents reported being isolated from their friends and/or families.

Nine of the residents reported that their husbands had subjected them to forced sexual activity.

Four women said their husbands were looking for them - two of whom feared for their children. Four women believed that their husbands wanted reconciliation. Five reported their husbands were threatening vengeance.

Family Background: Five of the residents had experienced violence in their family background - four of whom were beaten and one who was not herself beaten but saw her mother being physically assaulted. Six of the residents had experienced no violence in their parental homes.

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